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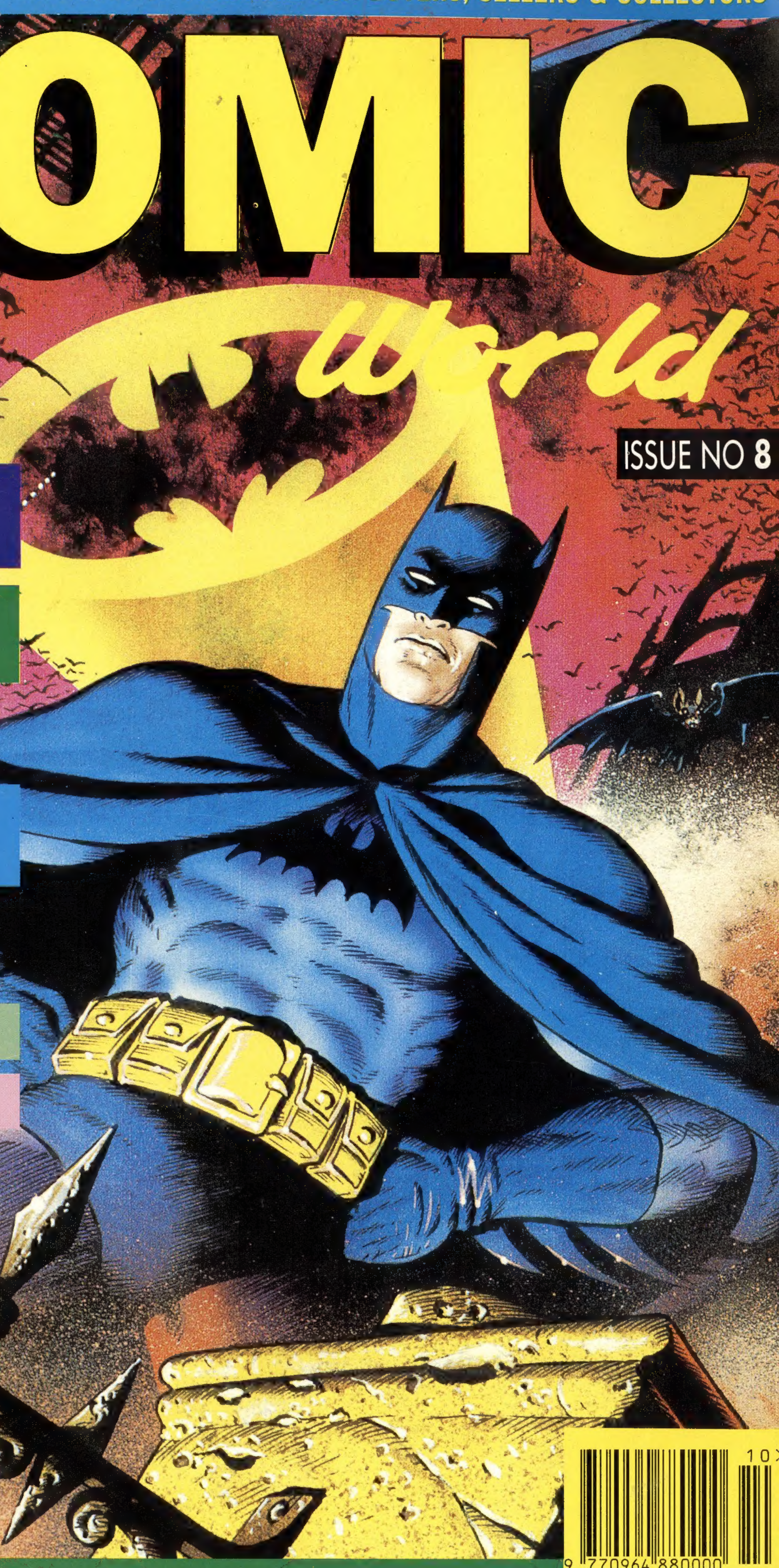
COMIC World

OCTOBER 1992

ISSUE NO 8



BRYAN TALBOT
THE PSYCHOLOGY OF BATMAN

GRANT MORRISON
DRAWS UP THE BATTLE LINES

DEATH'S HEAD
PSYCHOTIC CYBORG MAYHEM

PLUS

COLIN MACNEIL

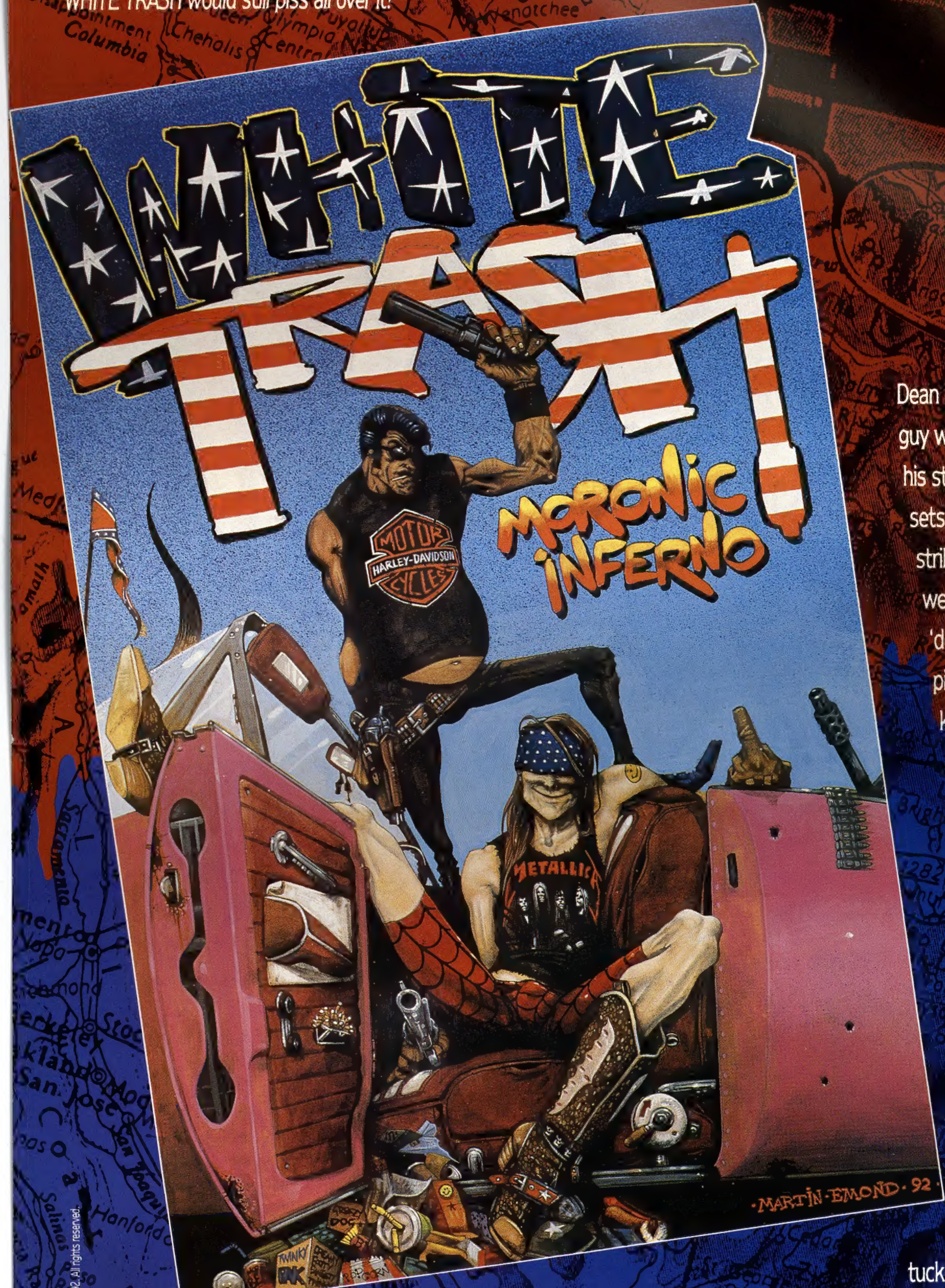
SHADOW'S EDGE

SCIENCE FICTION World
ISSUE 0
DR WHO
TERRY PRATCHETT
HARRY HARRISON

FREE MAGAZINE

GRAPHIC NOVELS · DARK HORSE · TUNDRA · NEWS

If the National Enquirer were a road movie scripted by Hunter S. Thompson, directed by the Coen brothers, with a soundtrack by Guns 'n' Roses, WHITE TRASH would still piss all over it!



Dean is your average metal head – a guy with a geetar and dreams of squealing his strat in every stadium in the land. So he sets out to hitch to L.A. Then, destiny strikes! Dean gets a lift from an overweight rocker in a pink cadillac who 'don't have no truck with faggots, pinkos, commies and smart-ass college kids'. Together, they take the car, the assorted artillery, their sugar dependency and a combined IQ of 37 across America, laying waste all before them in the name of God-fearing, American values...

A swift enema administered to the American Dream, **WHITE TRASH** is a violent, in-your-face hymn to the white-picket-fence, two-car, air-conditioned, colour co-ordinated, nipped-and-tucked American Nightmare.

★ GORDON RENNIE
★ MARTIN EMOND

ISSUE #1 In comic shops now. **£2.50.**
Buy it or become a Neil Sedaka fan.

TUNDRA

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Cover: Bryan Talbot explores the delirious dreams of the alcoholic Bruce Wayne, who believes himself a millionaire playboy and masked vigilante. Can it be true? See the interview this issue. Meanwhile, cheers to Bryan for a superb cover and to all at DC. Batman © DC Comics Inc.

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What's in a name? 30 days ago we were Comic Collector *and now we're* Comic World. *Not a great difference, you may think, but a lot of hard work for the boys and girls who work at East Hill, stripped to the waist in the blazing heat, muscles straining over burning word processors, the crack of the whip...but enough of how we relax after office hours. You want to know about the new issue?*

For newcomers, we were called Comic Collector *for our first 7 issues. The new title describes the contents better, we think: there's a big world of comics out there and we try our best to cover as diverse a selection of the industry as we can within the boundaries we have to stick to – the back cover's our limit I'm afraid, unless you start seeing "continued in..." whatever's next to us on the rack. Could you imagine our Grant Morrison interview continued in* Smash Hits! *or* Take A Break?

So before you get to the back cover this issue you'll get to see what Marvel are doing to that psychotic robot bounty hunter, Death's Head, what Tundra are up to following the rumour-machine reports of their death, Dark Horse's plans for expanding into the UK, the rebirth of the graphic novel, and interviews with Colin Macneil on Mechanismo, Bryan Talbot on Batman, One Bad Rat and Arkwright, and Grant Morrison on, er, steroids is our guess ("The views expressed...", see left).

Interviews, features, news...but no 96 page price guide? What? A magazine about comics that's about comics? We'll leave the prices to the people who confuse 'hot' with 'cool'.

Also this issue, a free magazine. Need I say more? Let us know what you think. Should we do this sort of thing regularly? If we do what would you like to see? Come to think of it, is there anything in Comic *that you'd like to see?*

For those of you still with me after all those temptations to get straight into the rest of the magazine, I've got some people to thank – but don't let that drive you away. Comic World, *and* Science Fiction World, *wouldn't be here without the help of a lot of people. It wouldn't be practical to name them all individually (we want some space for those features), but it's important to realise that* Comic Collector *survived because of the hard work of our typesetters, repro-house and printers, the support of advertisers and the incredible efforts of "the industry", from presidents to publicity officers, from creators to critics. Many thanks to you one and all for your support with* Comic Collector, *and in advance for your continued support with* Comic World

There's only you and me left now, so I'll just say that next month we've got Clive Barker and the new Barkerverse, The Punisher, and vampires galore. See you in thirty days for some Halloween fun!

COMIC NEWS

DC CREATE NEW LINE OF COMICS

DC Comics have announced that they will be creating a new line of multicultural super-hero comics with multimedia packager and licensor, Milestone Media Inc. This is the first time that an independent company, owned and operated by comic-book creators, has contracted with a major company to produce a full line of comics.

Milestone Media is a group of creative artists who have worked extensively in the contemporary marketplace of comics and magazines. Amongst the creators involved are Denys Cowan, artist of DC's *Batman* and *The Question*; Dwayne McDuffie, a former editor at Marvel and Harvey and writer of *Captain Marvel* and *Back to the Future*; and Michael Davis, a graphic artist and trade press columnist.

Cowan and McDuffie recently collaborated on *Prince: Alter Ego* published by Piranha Press, and had previously worked together on Marvel's *Deathlok*.

Derek Dingle, President of Milestone and the former managing editor of *Black Enterprise* magazine, said "We have allied ourselves with DC because their commitment to the advancement of the industry complements our commitment to broadening the medium's horizons."

Paul Levitz, Executive Vice-President and Publisher at DC, said "This contract places Milestone in a unique position, like an independent production company at a major movie studio. They will create characters, develop stories, and package all the elements for the finished comics."

The new line will be launched in the Spring of 1993.

NEW CONCEPT FOR MARVEL ANNUALS

Marvel Comics has announced that their 1993 annuals will each feature a new super-hero or super-villain. Senior executive editor Mark Gruenwald said, "For the past five years, our annuals have successfully featured various types of crossovers, but now we felt that it was time to try something new and different."

Looking for a fresh way of unifying their annuals, published each year between April and August, Marvel's editorial braintrust decided to focus on 'The Superstars of Tomorrow', and the 24 Annuals will feature 24 new characters in self contained stories, with no crossover storylines, no family groupings and no umbrella titles. The new characters' origins, powers and costumes will be fully delineated in the course of the annual and integrated into the Marvel universe. According to Gruenwald, it will allow Marvel's creators "to roll out some of the characters that they've been nurturing in the backs of their minds and never had a place to feature them to their fullest advantage."

ALIENS VS PREDATOR ANNOUNCED

Following the less-than-successful *Aliens*^{3} - it will almost certainly not go into profit until the video release - Dark Horse Entertainment have announced that the next *Alien* movie will be *Aliens vs. Predator.*

The film will be a joint venture between 20th Century Fox and Largo Entertainment *(see our Dark Horse feature this issue)*, with director Roland Emmerich. It will be loosely based on the *Alien vs. Predator* series published by Dark Horse in 1990.

Dark Horse Entertainment have also announced that their first film, *Dr. Giggles*, will be released over the Halloween week-end, confirmed that a film version of Paul Chadwick's *Concrete* will definitely go ahead, and that there will be a full-length animated version of *Aqua Blue*, based on the French series published by Dargaud.

CBG FAN AWARDS

I--I BEG PARDON, LORD SHAPER. I DID NOT MEAN TO PRESUME...

***The Comic Buyers Guide* have announced their Fan Awards for 1991, the winners as follows (2nd and 3rd place in parenthesis):**

Favourite Editor: Bob Harras (Tom DeFalco, Karen Berger)

Favourite Writer: Neil Gaiman (Peter David, Chris Claremont)

Favourite Penciller: Jim Lee (Todd McFarlane, John Byrne)

Favourite Inker: Scott Williams (Art Thibert, Terry Austin)

Favourite Colourist: Joe Rosas (Steve Oliff, Gregory Wright)

Favourite Painter: Simon Bisley (Joe Jusko, Dave McKean)

Favourite Letterer: Tom Orzechowski (Todd Klein, Rick Parker)

Favourite Cover Artist: Jim Lee (Simon Bisley, Todd McFarlane)

Favourite Comic-Book Story: 'Season of Mists', *Sandman 21-28* ('Rubicon Saga', *X-Men 1-3*, 'Titans Hunt', *The New Titans 71-84*)

Favourite Comic Book: *X-Men* (*Sandman*, *Uncanny X-Men*)

Favourite Limited Comic-Book Series: *Infinity Gauntlet* (*Batman vs Predator*, *Books of Magic*)

Favourite Original Graphic Novel or Album: *Judgement on Gotham* (Batman: Red Rain, *Hearts of Darkness*)

AWARDS! AWA

Funny Bunnies (everyday tales of "rabbit ~ folk").
© Phil Baber mcmxvii
MEARY DE !!!
MAYHAP THIS 'OPEN-CAST BURROW' WASN'T SUCH A FINE IDEA !!!
JUMPIN' JIRDS!
I NEED A MOIST WIPE... NOW!
I'VE LAYED WASTE TO 2,600 HECTARES OF VIABLE MEADOWLAND!
GORKS GALOOLA!!
PLUS! LOOK AT ALL THAT DIRT I'VE WASTED!
OH THE SHAME! I'M ONE OF THE FEW THAT SPOILS IT FOR THE MANY!!
THE 'AUTHORITIES' MAY SHOW UP SHORTLY...
..MAYBE THE GOVERNMENT WILL BE HERE SOON!
..MAYBE THEY HAVE 'RADAR'!
..WHAT IS IT I'M DOING?
..I GOTS TO GET ME GONE!
OOH
OH! I HATE THIS BLOODY STRIP!
..AND I HATE THIS STUPID COMIC!
PHLTOO

SUPERMAN CREATOR DIES AT 78

Joe Shuster, Superman's co-creator and original artist, died in California on July 30, aged 78.

Shuster was born in Canada in 1914, but his family moved to Ohio in 1924 where he attended High School and met fellow science-fiction enthusiast, Jerry Siegel. The two teenagers produced fan magazines, while Shuster worked at a sign-painting shop and sold newspapers before winning a scholarship to the Clevedon School of Art.

In the early 1930s, Siegel and Shuster produced several comic-book strips, including 'Radio Squad', 'Dr. Occult', 'Federal Man', and 'Slam Bradley'. 'Superman' had been conceived in 1933 as a newspaper strip, but it was rejected by all the major syndicates, remaining unpublished until National's Harry Donnenfeld bought it in 1938 for $130. At the same time the creators signed away rights to Superman and agreed to work exclusively for National for the next ten years.

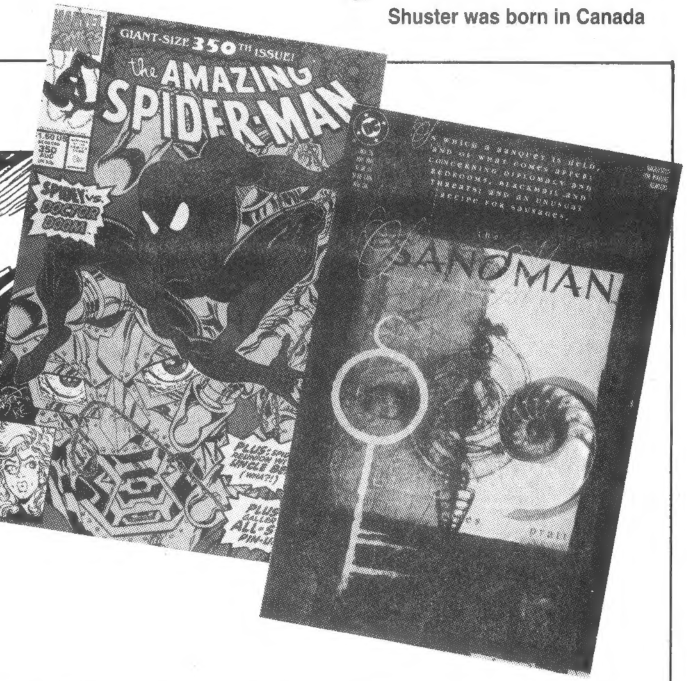
A re-formatted version of the strip appeared in National's new title, *Action Comics 1* (June 1938), and the character won his own title in 1939, co-starred in *World's Finest*, and inspired Sunday and daily newspaper strips. To help meet his busy schedule, and because he was already suffering from failing vision, Shuster hired several assistants, including Wayne Boring; throughout the 1940s most of the work signed by Shuster was drawn by others.

Action Comics sold a million copies a month, and *Superman* one and a quarter million, and the character, through newspapers, radio, animated cartoons and merchandising, was earning DC over $15,000,000. Although Siegel and Shuster had originally relinquished their rights, the creators took DC to court to gain a larger share of the profits. They failed, and in 1947 were fired, and their names removed from the feature.

After creating the short-lived *Funnyman* for Magazine Enterprises, Jerry Siegel continued to write, but Joe Shuster, now with rapidly failing eyesight, did no further comic work for the rest of his life. In *The Comic Book Greats*, Joe Simon tells Jerry Robinson's story of how Joe Shuster, working as a delivery boy, had been seen in the building where National had its offices; the following day, he was called in to see a DC executive who scolded him for wandering the halls in rags, gave Shuster a hundred dollars to buy an overcoat and told him to get another job where he wouldn't embarrass the company.

In 1975, when Shuster was destitute and legally blind, a media campaign supported by many industry professionals encouraged DC to recognise their character's original creators. In 1978, after the first *Superman* movie had made $82 million, the publishers agreed to pay an annual sum of $20,000 (later $30,000) to each creator and restore their names to the comics' credits. According to a DC spokesman, "There was no legal obligation, but I sure feel there is a moral obligation."

Shuster's artwork, never slick or glossy, was clear and easy to follow, and established the style of *Superman* for the feature's first period of popularity. He established several story-telling conventions that are now commonplace, including the layout of panels to emphasise the action on a comic page, and the use of 'splash panels' at the beginning of stories. Although he contributed to the early success of the whole comic-book industry, Joe Shuster will always be remembered as the co-creator of the first and most enduring comic-book hero, one of the best-known fictional characters of the 20th century.



Favourite Reprint Graphic Novel or Album: *Sandman: Preludes and Nocturnes* (*Crossover Classics, Incredible Hulk: Ground Zero*)
Favourite Character: Spider-Man (Wolverine, Batman)
Favourite Publication About Comics: *Wizard* (*Comic Shop News, Advance Comics*)

RDS! AWARDS!

HUMOUR COMICS AWARDS

The first annual Humour Comics Awards were presented at the Gloucester Comics Fair on August 8, voted for by readers of *UT*, *Smut*, *Viz*, *Zit*, *Gutter*, *Acne*, *Ziggy*, *Pulp*, *Electric Soup* and *Mad* magazines, and members of the Society of Strip Illustration (the meaning of Favourite Ex-Comic was intended to imply a recently cancelled title, and the winner, *Viz*, is still with us, we hasten to point out!):

Best Supporting Character: Anglepoise Elephant by Dave Jones (*Ut*) (Mutha Bacon (*Viz*), Battler Britton (*Ut*))
Best Spin-Off Product: Teenage Lesbian Nymphomaniac Mutant Bimbo Surfers T-Shirt (Fat Slags Beach Towel, The Urinator T-Shirt)
Best New Title of 1991/2: *Ut* (*Acne, Talking Turkey*)
Favourite Ex-Comic: *Viz* (*Gas, Toxic*)
Most Missed Strip: The Driver by David Leach (*Toxic*) (Phallus (*Gas*), The Saddam Family (*Ut*))
Worst Strip (tie): Val Downer by Kipps Webb (*Ut*), Arthur Pilkington by David Leach (*Ut*) (Mavis Fritter (*Gutter*), Madass Hussein (*Zit*))
Worst Comic: *Smut* (*Gutter, Viz*)
Funniest Character: Arthur Pilkington by David Leach (*Ut*) (Psycho Derek (*Zit*), Fat Frank of the Taxi Rank (*Ut*))
Best Strip: Special Agent Smegg by Sven Thread-Fluk & John Erasmus (*Ut*) (Student Grant (*Viz*), The Greens (*Electric Soup*))
Lifetime Achievement: Chris Donald and *Viz* comic (Kev F. Sutherland, David Leach)
Best Writer: Phil Baber (David Leach, Russ Carvell)
Best Artist: John Erasmus (Phil Baber, Kev F. Sutherland)
Funniest Comic: *Ut* (*Electric Soup, Viz*)

CHARTS

Best selling titles published for September. Based on advance orders received by Titan Distributors. Last months position in second column.

1	1	**X-Men 14** (Marvel)
2	2	**Uncanny X-Men 294** (Marvel)
3	4	**X-Force 16** (Marvel)
4	6	**X-Factor 84** (Marvel)
5	—	**Spider-Man 2099 1** (Marvel)
6	3	**Cable 2** (Marvel)
7	5	**WildC.A.T.S. 3** (Image)
8	8	**Infinity Wars 6** (Marvel)
9	9	**Spawn 5** (Image)
10	27	**Ghost Rider 31** (Marvel)
11	—	**Night Stalker 1** (Marvel)
12	11	**Lobo: Infanticide** (DC)
13	14	**Sandman 43** (DC)
14	13	**Spider-Man 28** (Marvel)
15	15	**Wolverine 63** (Marvel)
16	—	**Supreme 1** (Image)
17	17	**Excalibur 56** (Marvel)
18	—	**X-Men Animated Series 1** (Marvel)
19	16	**Legends of the Dark Knight 39** (DC)
20	—	**Terminator: End Game 1** (Dark Horse)
21	17	**Excalibur 57** (Marvel)
22	20	**Incredible Hulk 399** (Marvel)
23	23	**Amazing Spider-Man 368** (Marvel)
24	18	**Batman: Sword of Azrael 2** (DC)
25	23	**Amazing Spider-Man 369** (Marvel)
26	—	**Legends of the Dark Knight Annual 2** (DC)
27	26	**Spirits of Vengeance 4** (Marvel)
28	19	**Cyberforce 2** (Image)
29	—	**Hellblazer 59** (DC)
30	—	**Punisher War Zone 9** (Marvel)

Chart supplied by Titan Distributors

COMIC MARTS

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LEICESTER

YMCA, GRANBY STREET, LEICESTER
SUNDAY: SEPTEMBER 27th, NOVEMBER 15th

LIVERPOOL

FORTE CREST HOTEL, LORD NELSON STREET, LIVERPOOL
SUNDAY: OCTOBER 4th, NOVEMBER 22nd

MANCHESTER

PARKERS HOTEL, CORPORATION STREET, MANCHESTER
SATURDAY: SEPTEMBER 12th, NOVEMBER 21st

NEWCASTLE

BLACKFRIARS HALL, NEW BRIDGE STREET, NEWCASTLE
SATURDAY: OCTOBER 17th

NOTTINGHAM

STAKIS VICTORIA HOTEL, MILTON STREET, NOTTINGHAM
SATURDAY: OCTOBER 10th, NOVEMBER 14th

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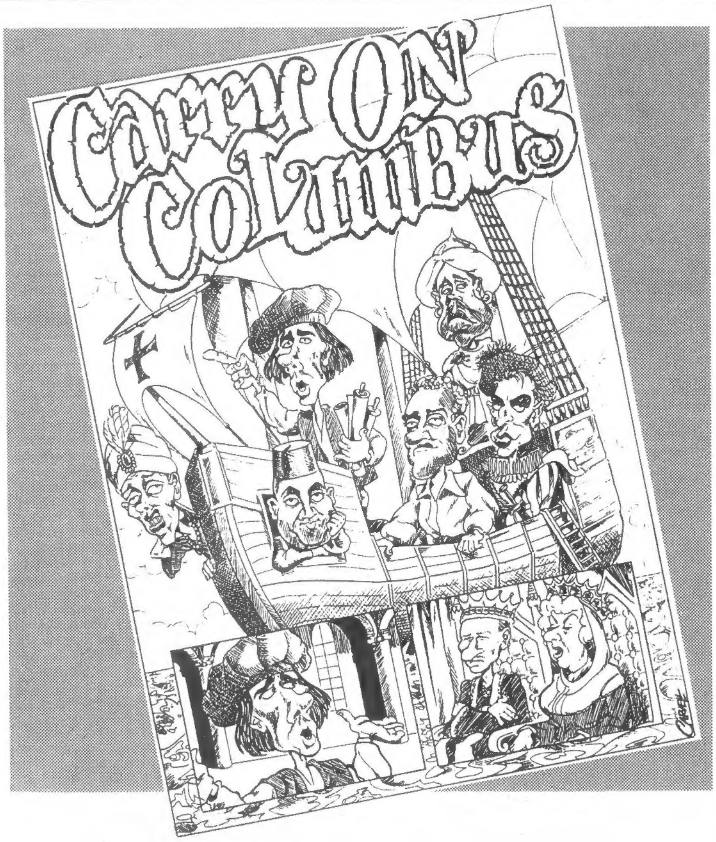


MENG & ECKER – GUILTY OF OBSCENITY?

On July 30, Manchester based publishers Savoy Books went to court to defend a destruction order placed on copies of the novel *Lord Horror* and the comic *Meng & Ecker* which were seized during a raid by police in 1989. The order was issued in 1991 when stipendiary magistrate, Derick Fairclough, deemed the titles to be obscene.

Publishers Michael Butterworth and David Britton, and Geoffrey Robertson QC successfully defended the novel, written by Britton, which was based around the exploits of Lord Haw Haw (Nazi propagandist William Joyce, hanged for treason in 1946) and Adolf Hitler in an absurdist and surreal travalogue littered with philosophical ramblings. Michael Moorcock was amongst the witnesses defending the book.

The order against *Meng & Ecker* was upheld, however. Judging the case, Gerard Humphries said that the comic "could be read – and possibly gloated over – by people who enjoyed viciousness and violence. It had pictures that would be repulsive to right-thinking people." During the ruling he also stated that "the comic is more luridly bound and it is more likely to attract attention from the less literate."

In a statement, Mike Butterworth again maintained that the comic was not designed to promote violence or racism: "it's visual nature makes it *less* likely to cause harm, because the immediacy of the form makes the inherent content of the strips more apparent."

Butterworth will now be taking the case to the Appeal Courts.

BRITISH HUMOUR MAGAZINES: WEATHERING THE STORM

From issue 9 (a Tatty Holiday Special, referring to the Scottish traditional potato picking holiday, rather than the quality of the contents), *UT* will be joining *Viz* as a bi-monthly title. The move from its previous monthly schedule is in an effort to weather the recession which has squeezed adult humour comics badly in the past year. Titles to have folded in the last six months have included *Talking Turkey*, *Ziggy* and *Gutter*, while *Acne* (actually not an adult title, but part of the genre) has had to move from a fortnightly to a monthly frequency, and *Zit* has been unable to keep its full-colour covers, reverting to just a single spot colour.

"*UT*'s decision has been made to maintain the quality of the title," says editor Kev F. Sutherland. "The verdict of the public, borne out by the results of the Humour Comics Awards *(see elsewhere on these news pages for results)* seems to have been that quality is *UT*'s winning factor."

Whilst other magazines have striven to ride on the coat-tails of *Viz* – a forthcoming title, *Spit*, has been asking its artists to draw pages "as if they'd just fallen out of *Viz*" – Sutherland has used "a broad spectrum of artists and writers to create a comic that owes more to Harvey Kurtzman than Chris Donald".

Private Eye editor, Ian Hislop, recently wrote to acknowledge that a recent *Eye* cartoon, published in May 1992, bore an uncanny similarity to a gag run on the back page of *UT*'s January issue.

Following the recent horror title, *Bloody Hell*, UT Productions are producing an official comics strip adaptation of the *Carry on Columbus* movie, produced in conjunction with Peter Rogers, and hope to shortly be producing a pullout comic section for a new national newspaper.

DARK HORSE

Dark Horse will be taking over the publication of *The Terminator* from Trident, who have recently gone into liquidation. The new *Terminator* magazine will continue the old numbering, the first Dark Horse issue being issue 13, released September 17. The new version will be running 'Hunters and Killers' and 'End Game', two of the successful stories published by Dark Horse in the USA (where they have, by coincidence, just lost the license to Marvel). The following issue (released October 1) will see the start of 'RoboCop vs Terminator', will increase size to 52 pages, and offer the first of a series of cut-out figures in the time-honoured tradition for free gifts in British comics.

September 29 will see the first issue of *Stars Wars featuring Indiana Jones* which will reprint 'Dark Empire' and 'Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis'. The first issue will include an album and Star Wars trading cards; more cards will appear in the second and third issues of this £1.50 monthly.

ACME COMICS

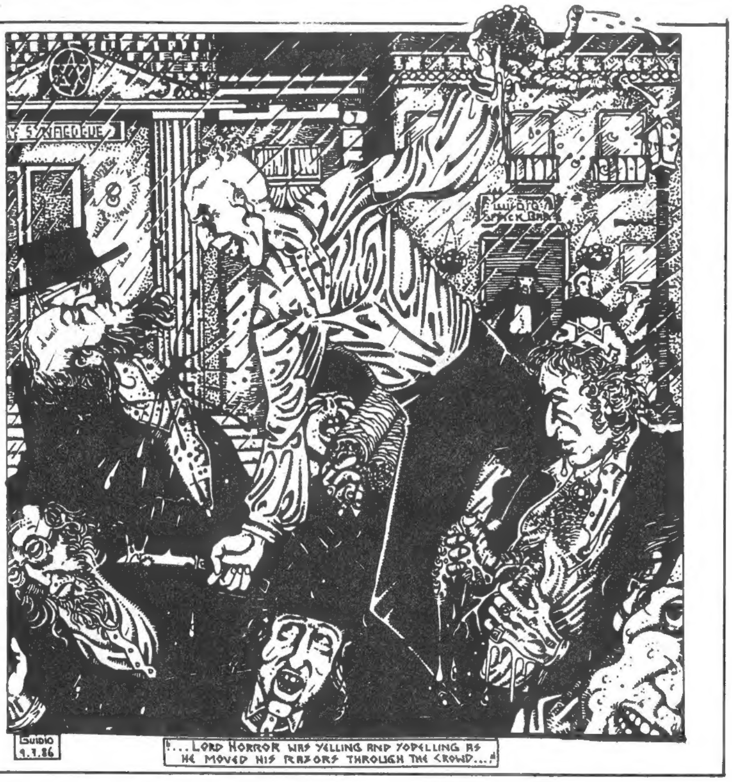
Dick Hansom, now happily esconsed at Dark Horse as Managing Editor, tells us that Acme Comics will still be producing material both solo and in association with Dark Horse. The second issue of *Lux & Alby* was delayed at the printers, but should

●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●

TUNDRA/ATOMEKA NEW TITLES

In the wake of Tundra's rationalisation, Dave Elliott has told *Comic World* that amongst the titles affected will be *Greenhouse Warriors* by Glen Dakin & Phil Elliott, *Burglar Bill* by Paul Grist, *Brickman* by Lew Stringer, and *Dicks* by Garth Ennis & John McCrea – the last a follow up to the *Troubled Souls* series' in *Crisis*.

The new line-up for Atomeka will begin with the publication of *White Trash* this month, but moves up a gear in February of 1993 with the publication of *Monster Massacre*, a seven issue showcase of "senseless violence and steroids" from big-name contributors, including Simon Bisley (on the previously announced 'Max


GUIDIO
9.1.86
"...LORD HORROR WAS YELLING AND YODELLING AS HE MOVED HIS RAZORS THROUGH THE CROWD..."

be in the shops by the time you read this; issue 3 will be pushed back slightly because of the delay, but the book should be back on schedule by issue 4.

The James Bond series, *Serpent's Tooth* has had a fantastic reaction from fans (see our interview in issue 5 if you've not yet picked up this one), and further Bond stories are in the works: following a three-parter by Simon Jowett & John Burns, Jowett (whose work has gone down very well with Ian Fleming's estate) will pen the two-part *James Bond 007: The Shattered Helix* which has Bond in Antarctica facing a deadly ecological menace. Art will be by David Lloyd & David Jackson.

The new Dark Horse anthology, *Dark Horse Comics* will shortly carry a 4-issue James Bond series entitled 'Light of My Death' by Das Petrou and Jon Watkiss, who are the creators of *Ring of Roses*, coming from Dark Horse in November. Further ahead, we can look forward to another Bond by Doug Moench, this time with artist Russ Heath for the story *A Minute of Midnight*.

Carnage') and Dave Gibbons.

Other titles announced include *Sweetmeats* by Steve Tanner & Pete Venters, a grim one-shot tale of corrupted innocence; *Lords of Misrule* by John Tomlinson & Gary Erskine, described as "an unholy marriage of *Twin Peaks* and H.P.Lovecraft"; *Kingdom of the Wicked* by Ian Edgington & D'Israeli, a disturbing dream-story of a crippled man and his fantasy world populated by the toys of his childhood memories, now in the grip of a bloody war; *Strange Embrace* by David Hine, a modern gothic horror story; *Pale Horses* by Dan Abnett, Steve White & Gary Erskine – aerial combat in a future Vietnam; and *Born Again* by Jamie Hewlett & Philip Bond.

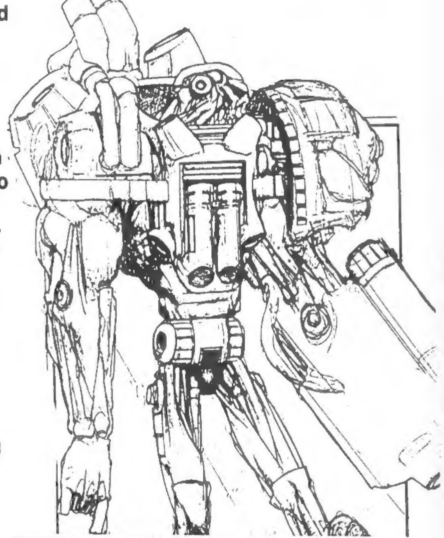
MARVEL'S HEROSWARM

Marvel UK have announced a number of titles for publication over the next few months following the success of *Death's Head*, *Warheads* and other MyS-TECH Universe titles in the USA. After the first wave of new titles (see news last issue), January 1993 will see the start of the *MyS-TECH Wars*, a 4-issue mini-series which will cross-over into all the regular Marvel UK titles. It begins when Nick Fury is captured by Crowe of the Mys-TECH Board, and it will leave several Marvel US characters with a greater awareness of the threat the Board presents. Written by Dan Abnett and drawn by Bryan Hitch, the mini-series will be followed later in the year by a further spin-off title to be written by Steve Parkhouse.

Shadow Riders will be a four-issue mini-series debuting in early 1993, written by John Freeman & Brian Williamson and pencilled by Charles Adlard, featuring Boot, Stranger, Roadie, Grunt and the Techno-Wizard, Vorin - a motley crew of bikers and outcasts with their own special powers and, allied with X-Force's Cable, aiming to strike a blow at the heart of MyS-TECH.

May 1993 should see the launch of *Blood Seed*, written by Paul Neary & Liam Sharp and pencilled by the latter, a twist on the classic sword and sorcery figure as Blood Seed travels across a barbarian world to deliver a unique genetic message...only he doesn't know who he's delivering it to!

Further into the future, expect the following characters to be making an appearance: *Wild Thing*, *Blackaxe*, *Super Soldiers* (all mid-1993), *Gunrunner*, *Gene Machine*, *Plasmer*, (in July), *Death Rattle*, and *Death Metal* (late 1993).



NEWSBRIEF

MARVEL

- Graham S. Brand, who penned a number of stories for Marvel UK including work for *Strip* and *Dr. Who Magazine*, was killed in an accident in May 1992 at the age of 27.

- Death's Head will be joining the cast of *Overkill* in issue 12, replacing the Knights of Pendragon, who will continue to appear in the American version. Issue 12 will also see the return of Digitek. The frustrating shortening of stories for their British appearances, which removed cross-over storylines with Wolverine, X-Men, Iron Man and Nick Fury will come to an end after clamorous demands from readers. The full versions of 'Hell's Angel' and 'Warheads' will now be printed, followed shortly by the complete version of 'Motormouth'.

- *Hell's Angel* is to be retitled *Dark Angel* from issue 6 which will be drawn by Gary Frank & Cam Smith before new regular artist Duke *(Accident Man)* Mighton takes over for issue 7 and 8, which will be written by Gary Russell.

- *Warheads* will be drawn by Simon Coleby from issue 6 until 12, when new artist Stuart Jennett takes over. Nick Vince will continue as writer.

- The UK Universe titles are proving popular in the USA, with *Warheads 1* entering the Diamond Comic Distributors Top 100 charts at 28. *Motormouth 1* achieved a creditable 76. *Digitek 1*, originally scheduled for July entered at 75, but is now being solicited for October.

TUNDRA

- The second issue of *Lazerus Churchyard*, to be released in September, will include 8 pages in addition to the stories advertised, a jam session by artists including Duncan Fegrado and Gary Erskine. The third issue will be entitled *Inspector Sleep*, replacing the previously announced *Furyeyes*. The past comes back to haunt Lazerus as the descendent of a family butchered by Lazerus tries to fulfil a 400 year old vendetta.
- Warren Ellis has penned a new series for *Heavy Metal* with artist Phil Winslade.

INFO

- *Info* is a magazine produced by the Office of Fair Trading in association with the BBC's *Lifeschool* programme, which includes strips and illustrations by Hunt Emerson, Bryan Talbot (a Judge Dredd strip), Paul Johnson, Ian Ellery, Craig Dixon & Caspar Williams. Available free in all Secondary Schools, it's essential reading if you want to avoid getting ripped off. Adults might benefit too...further information on 071 242 2858.

KNOCKABOUT

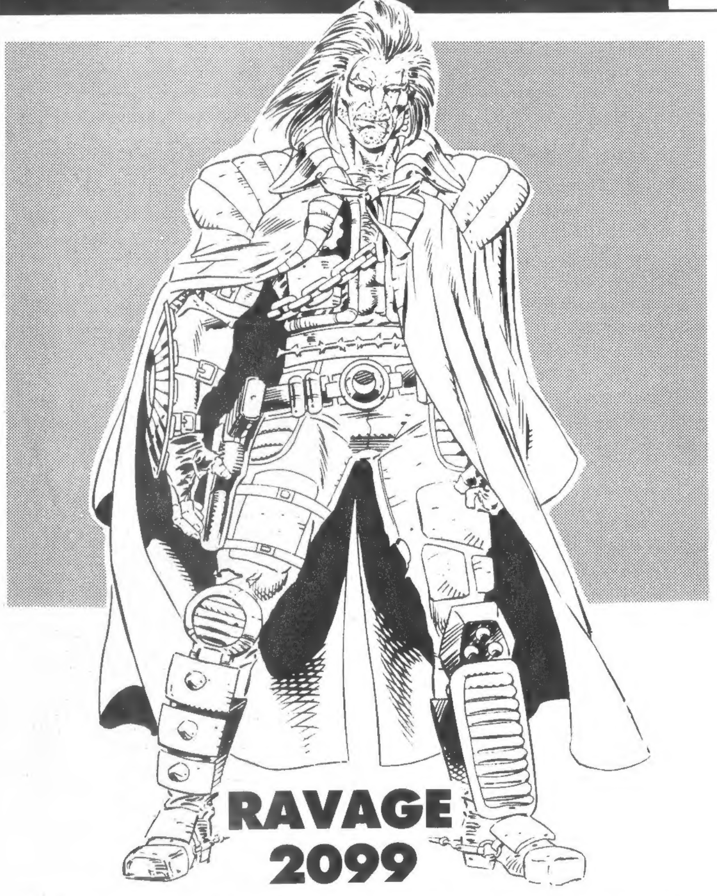
- *Robert Crumb Draws the Blues* is a large format trade paperback to be published in October containing strips from various stages of Crumb's career, ranging from the silly to the heartbreaking. Priced at £6.99, the book is also available in a limited hardback priced !29.99.

PRICE GUIDE

- The first *Comic Book Price Guide for Great Britain* update will be published in October, featuring revised prices from the regular annual edition published in April. The book will also include new and expanded features and market reports from dealers throughout the country.

TITAN

- Titan Books will be releasing *The Official Red Dwarf Companion* on October 22, priced at £6.99, a highly illustrated behind the scenes companion to the hilarious TV series, written by Bruce Dessau and introduced by series creators Rob Grant & Doug Naylor.



RAVAGE 2099

The second in the Marvel 2099 group of titles ships on October 13. *Ravage 2099 #1* is written by Stan Lee and drawn by Paul Ryan & Keith Williams, the story of Paul-Phillip Ravage, a former commander of ECO, a trans-national corporation whose job it is to clean up the late 21st century. Only when a corrupt element of ECO frame him for a crime he did not commit does he become Ravage, environmental terrorist and bounty-hunter. The first issue will include a foil-stamped cover.

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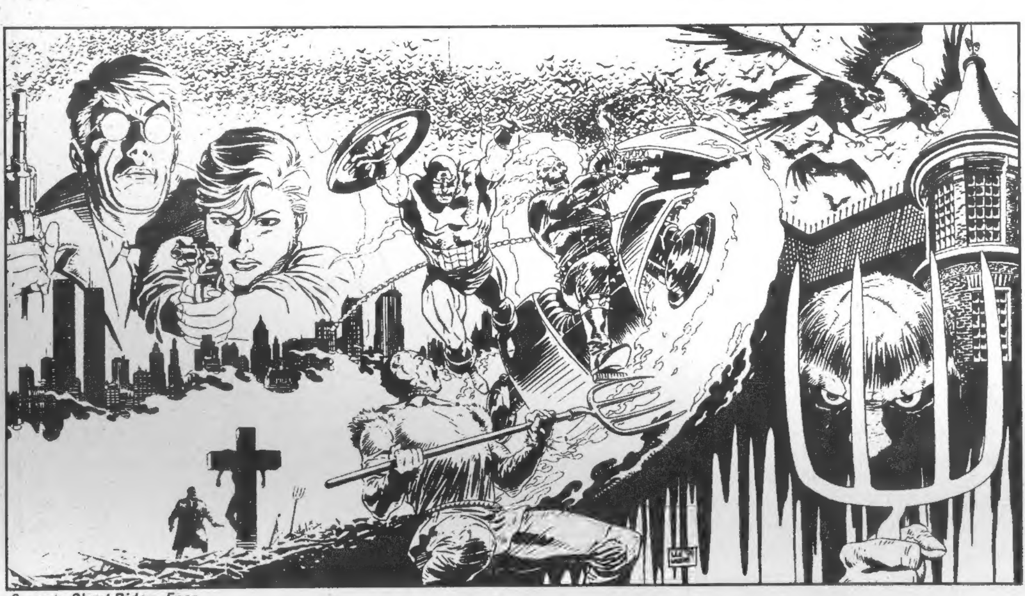
GHOST RIDER: FEAR

Captain America jumps out of the frying pan and straight into the fire! October sees the final part of his team up with the Punisher in *Blood and Glory* and straight into *Ghost Rider: Fear*, written by *Ghost Rider* regular, Howard Mackie and drawn by Lee *(Daredevil)* Weeks and Al *(Spider-Man 2099)* Williamson.

***Fear* marks the return of the all new Scarecrow, more macabre than ever and twice as insane. Cap and GR find themselves teamed-up in a very unlikely alliance. Priced $5.95, this 48 page one-shot ships October 20.**



Cover to **Ghost Rider: Fear**

ROUND-UP

One day they'll change their name to Zeta Flight and come last in the alphabetical lists, but until they do...*Alpha Flight 115* ships on October 13, as Weapon X teams up with Alpha Flight to save Weapon Omega, and a new villain is introduced – Wyre.

The 30th Birthday celebrations continue with a special slice of history, a full reprint of *Amazing Spider-Man 1*, ads and all. It's out on October 13. Over in the latest issue, 370, it's part 3 of 'Invasion of the Spider Slayers' as Spidey and Black Cat take on the Scorpion. The action continues two weeks later on October 27.

Avengers 357 ships on October 20, and the Swordsman devises a unique way of escaping the Avengers mansion.

Iron Man is refused membership to the AWC in *Avengers West Coast 89*, shipping October 6, despite Living Lightning taking leave of absence.

The Hulk and the Rhino guest star in *Cage 9*, shipping October 6, and Cage is caught between them as he tries to put Rhino back in the Vault.

The new improved Diamondback settles her scores against Crossbones in the final part of of the Diamondback/Crossbones/Skeleton Crew storyline. *Captain America 410* also sees Falcon return as his regular partner. Ships October 6.

Conan and Hobb face the demon known as Malaq in *Conan 263*, shipping October 20, whilst the same day sees *Conan Saga 69* released, as Conan agrees to find a woman's husband, little realising that the man is out to make himself master of the Hyborian Age.

Daredevil 311 sees DD fighting Calypso in the conclusion of a two-parter.

Ghost Rider guest stars in part two of 'Return to Forever', and lends a hand to Darkhawk, left last issue fighting for his life in the cemetery where his father is buried. *Darkhawk 22* ships October 6.

Darkhold 3 is shipping October 13, and Modred the Mystic sends the redeemers on a deadly mission that puts them between an inhuman killing machine and a salvation that's even worse.

'Cyberwar' hits part two in *Deathlok 18*, shipping October 27: Silver Sable & the Wild Pack help Deathlok fight Ryker's army of Cyber Warriors, and the mystery of John Kelly – the first Deathlok – is solved.

Dr Strange 48 marks the beginning of a new direction as Len Kaminski takes over the writing. On October 27, his powers are halved when he refuses to fight Vishanti.

Scott Lobdell continues to script the bi-monthly *Excalibur* from an Alan Davis plot. Issue 58, shipping October 6, guest stars X-Men, teaming up with Excalibur to defend Alchemy from the Trolls released last issue. Two weeks later, Scott Collins takes on the art chores as Forge and Mystique arrive in England, the first meeting between Mystique and Nightcrawler since *Uncanny X-Men 142.*

It's embossed cover time for *Fantastic Four 371*, shipping October 27 as the Human Torch goes Nova. He's about to make a deadly mistake that will change his life.

In *Ghost Rider 32* Dan Ketch returns to the land of the living thanks to guest star Dr Strange and Bret Blevins makes his debut as regular artist. It all happens October 13.

Cobra continues his attack on the Pit – the Joe's HQ – in *G.I. Joe 131*, shipping October 20. Meanwhile, Firefly takes over Cobra island.

Major Victory gets the chance of a lifetime in *Guardians of the Galaxy 31*, shipping October 13: he gets to team up with Captain America while the other Guardians prepare to attack the Badoon homeworld.

X-Men guest star in *Hell's Angel 6*, shipping October 20: they face an attack by the Matrix Assassin as MyS-TECH move to plunge the universe into chaos with the help of Mephisto.

Incredible Hulk hits 400 on October 20, a special 64-pager with a holo-grafx foil stamped cover. The story is the culmination of a 4-parter, crafted by Peter David, which pitches the Hulk against the Leader. As a bonus, there's also a reprint of the very first Leader story from *Tales to Astonish 63.*

Rhodey battles the all-new Atom Smasher in *Iron Man 287*, setting the stage for Shellhead's own 30th anniversary, only a few months away.

Marvel Comics 117, shipping October 13, sees the start of a Wolverine/Venom six parter by Howard Mackie & Sam Keith, plus Giant Man, a Lockheed & Devil Dinosaur drawn by Ron Lim, and Ghost Rider/Iron Fist. Two weeks later the Giant Man tale concludes, and Mark Bagley draws a solo Solo story.

The *Marvel Masterworks* series reaches volume 21 with a reprint of *Fantastic Four 31-40*, plus the *Annual 2*, 272 pages of Stan Lee & Jack Kirby classics. Ships October 6.

Marvel Tales 268, shipping October 20, reprints *Amazing Spider-*

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D.C's.

ACTION 567,574,578,581,584, 585,588,596,597,599, 601-605,608,610,616, 620,622,623,625,627, 631,644,645,662. ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS 8,9,11-13,36. ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN 425,437,438,450, 454,457,459-462,476, 478,480,481,483,485. ALL-STAR SQUADRON 51-54,56-58. AMETHYST 4, 6. ANGEL & THE APE 3. AQUAMAN 3. ARAK 14, 16,23,30,43,46. ATARI FORCE 2-4. BATMAN AND THE OUTSIDERS 7,8,10-13,16,20-24,26,36-39, 42-45. BLACKHAWK 5,6. BLUE BEETLE 7,8,20, 23,24. BLUE DEVIL 10-12,17. BOOSTER GOLD 6,24. THE BUTCHER 2-5. CAPTAIN ATOM 6-19, 30,32,34,35,39-41,43-45,53. CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN 2,3. CHECKMATE 2-4,7,9,10, 12,13,19-24,32. COPS 3-5,7-11,13-15. DEADSHOT 3. DR. FATE 5,9, 10,20. DOC SAVAGE 2, 5,6,10. DOOM PATROL 2-7. EL DIABLO 2-4, 14. ELECTRIC WARRIOR 4,12. FIRESTORM 10, 11,31,36,38,41,42,54, 66-77,87-90,94. FLASH 3-6,9,16,18,29. FLASH GORDON (9# mini) 1-4, 6,8. FOREVER PEOPLE (6# mini) 1-5. GAMMARAUDERS 1-4,6,8-10. GREEN ARROW 11,28,52. GREEN LANTERN (1st) 187,194,210,222,223. GREEN LANTERN 19,22. GREEN LANTERN EMERALD DAWN II 2,4- 6. HAWK & DOVE (Series) 2-4, 6,10,17,23. HAWKMAN 4-6,14. HAWKWORLD 2-4,6,11,14,16,18. HAYWIRE 1-4. HERO HOTLINE (1989 6# mini) 1-3,5,6. HUMAN TARGET SPECIAL 1. HUNTRESS 2-7,9,10,13, 14. JLA/JLI 27,29,37, 42,57,60. JL EUROPE 26,36. LEGENDS 1-4. LEGION 267,270,273, 274,284,288,295-299, 301,305,306,309,316-318,320,321,323-325, 335. LOSERS SPECIAL 1. MANHUNTER 2-6,12, 13,15,18. MAN OF STEEL 1 (Emblem cover) 2-6. MASK 1. MILLENIUM 1-8. MISTER MIRACLE 2-4,6-8,10, 17,18. NEW GODS 2-18, 22-25. THE NEW GUARDIANS 2,5-12. OUTLAWS 1,2. OUTSIDERS 2,4,5, 7,9,11,12,16,18. THE PHANTOM 4# mini 2. THE PHANTOM 2-8,12. PHANTOM STRANGER (4# mini) 1,3. POWERGIRL 2. POWER OF THE ATOM 2,3,5-13,15-17. THE QUESTION 13,20,23,29. RAGMAN 2-4,6. SECRET ORIGINS 22-26. SGT ROCK 375,417,421,422. SHADOW STRIKES 2-6,8, 9. SHAZAM 1-3. SILVERBLADE 2-4,6,7. SLASH MARAUD 6 Gulacy. SONIC DISRUPTORS 1-7. SPANNERS GALAXY 3,5. SPECTRE 3,5,6,8-10,12-14,17, 18,21,24,25. SPELLJAMMER 2,3,5-9,14,15. STARMAN 2-6,8,9,11-27,29,31-34,38-41. SUICIDE SQUAD 12,13, 17,20,21,44,53,56,57. SUPERBOY THE NEW ADVENTURES OF 16,20-22,28,33,37,42,44,47. SUPERBOY (2nd series TV) 1-3,7. SUPERMAN (2nd series) 2-4,11, 13,14,16-19,23,24,27, 28,34-40,43,45,48,49, 52-55,57-60,62. SUPERMAN THE MAN OF STEEL (1991) 2,4,5. TALOS SPECIAL 1. THE NEW TEEN TITANS (1980) 20,26,30-33, 35-38,40,41,45,47,49-54,56-63,65,68-70,74-77,81,83-91. THE NEW TEEN TITANS (1984, Baxter paper) 5-8,12-15,17,18,24,24,41,67. TEEN TITANS SPOTLIGHT 1-12,15-21. THRILLER 1-3,11. TIME MASTERS 1-3,5,6. UNDERWORLD 1-4. THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER 2-6,8. VIGILANTE 4,15,33,34,38-40. WANDERERS 2-13. WARLORD 51,89,90,93, 94,111-113,116,118. WASTELAND 3-9. WHO'S WHO (1st series) 1,3, 4,9-21,23-26 UPDATE '87 4,5. WHO'S WHO IN THE LEGION 2. WILD DOG 1-3. WILD DOG SPECIAL 1. WONDER WOMAN 3,4,8-20,22-25, 27-35,37,39,41,42,54, 61. WORLD OF METROPOLIS 1. WORLD OF SMALLVILLE 1,3. YOUNG ALL-STARS 4,10,11,13, 21,22.

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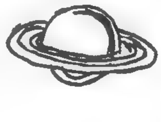

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MARVEL ROUND-UP

CONTINUED

Man 254 with art by Spider-Man 2099 penciller Rick Leonardi.

Dr. Paine is introduced to *Morbius 4* on October 20, a cross between Freddy Krueger and Dr. Mengele. Plus a cameo by Spider-Man.

Namor confronts Master Khan with the reluctant help of Dr. Doom in *Namor 33*, shipping October 6. It's the final battle for Namor's identity.

Night Thrasher 3 (of 4) has Gideon (from X-Force) in battle with Night Thrasher for control of the Taylor Foundation. It's a fight for life on October 6.

Hydra wants to create an army of vampire super soldiers in *Nightstalkers 2*, shipping October 6. In the opening scenes of a three-issue story, Hydra send out their own special strike force, the all-new D.O.A., to collect Hannibal King.

Nomad 8 takes place during the L.A. riots, described by Marvel as "a very objective view of a very controversial subject. You'll be able to form your own opinion on October 6.

Ghost Rider is caught between Snake Dance and Witch-Woman whilst trying to save Roxanne Simpson. It's *Original Ghost Rider 6*, shipping October 6, with the bonus of an all new 'Phantom Rider' back-up feature.

Pendragon get an update as Spider-Man guest stars. *Pendragon II 6* ships on October 13 with a cover by Alan Davis & Paul Neary, new costumes, and an evil alien spider threat.

'The Warehouse' is a three parter taking *The Punisher* up to his 75th issue. The Warehouse of the title is NYC's crack fortress, and Frank finds himself caught between the drug lord's hit man, Recoil, and the government anti-vigilante team, V.I.G.I.L. Issue 73 ships October 20.

Punisher & Captain America: Blood & Glory concludes with its third issue, shipping October 13.

But *Punisher War Zone* continues with issue 10 (October 13): Microchip returns and faces the malicious Magnificent Seven in a fight for his life and that of Doreen, the female police officer.

In the aftermath of the Infinity War, Quasar has been nullified, and Marvel Boy has taken his place as Protector of the Universe. *Quasar 41* ships October 13.

Ren & Stimpy come to comics on October 6! Based on the hit TV cartoon series, Marvel are promising that their comic version will be even more gross – so expect plenty of magic nose goblins, hairballs and litterbox antics. The first issue comes with one of two perforated air foulers – air fresheners in 'wet chihuahua' and 'litterbox' flavour. To keep the smell in, the comic will be poly-bagged!

Part 3 of 'Conan in the City of Magicians' features in *Savage Sword of Conan 204* in which Conan and Imhotep the ravager face Imhotep's own hellish hordes.

Jennifer is joined by Rocket Racoon in this months *She-Hulk 46*, shipping October 6. Together they face the Asparagus People.

Shield 42 launches a 4-part story on October 20 and introduces Strike Force Shield, a crack anti-terrorist squad led by Nick Fury.

Deathlok joins Sable and her Wild Pack to locate the Statue of Liberty in *Silver Sable 7*, shipping October 13.

Spider-Man shows up in *Slapstick 2*, shipping October 20. He gets everywhere these days!

Sleepwalker 19, shipping October 13 features a special pop-out Halloween mask for its Halloween issue.

Dirt is a magazine aimed at 13-18 year olds, and you can get hold of issue 2 with *Spectacular Spider-Man 195*, shipping October 27. It'll be poly-bagged with that issue, and you get a free cassette with it featuring 10 tracks by various bands. The story? Oh, that's part two of 'Death of Vermin'. But will you dare ever open the bag to find out? Well, you don't have to, because you can also buy the non-bagged version!

Spider-Man 29, shipping October 20, has art by Chris Marrinan and Sam DeLaRosa and the start of a three part story, 'Return to the Mad Dog Ward', a sequel to Ann Nocenti's classic 'Mad Dog Ward' story.

Spider-Man 2099 #2 ships on October 6 and continues the story of the 21st century Spidey's origin. The Alchemax Corp. send the corporate raider known as Venture to track him down and bring him back alive.

If that's not enough, try *The Spider-Man 30th Anniversary Poster Magazine*, 32 posters by everyone from Steve Ditko to Mark Bagley. It ships on October 20.

The Punisher guest stars in *Terror, Inc. 6*, shipping October 6, and Power Man's old foe, Piranha Jones returns.

Thor 455 guest stars Dr Strange, and Odin finally reveals where the real Thor has been hidden. Find out where on October 13. On October 27, Bloodaxe returns along with Earth Force and Code: Blue.

Death's Head continues his guest run in *Warheads 7* on October 27, leading directly to his new series, which premiers this month. Silver Surfer also turns up.

The true origins of Gamora, Drax, Moondragon and Pip are revealed in *Warlock & the Infinity Watch 11*, shipping October 20.

'Spirits of Venom' begins October 6 in *Web of Spider-Man 95*, a four part crossover with *Spirits of Vengeance*. Spidey, Ghost Rider and John Blaze team up to face Venom who takes it upon himself to punish Hag and Troll. The story continues on October 27 in *Spirits of Vengeance 27*, with Hag and Troll carrying Deathwatch's burnt body home, unleashing murderous forces against GR and Blaze. But help is at hand – in the form of Venom!

What If?...what if the Punisher had been possessed by Venom? Violent or what? Find out October 20 in #44, but my guess is, it's not going to be 'or what'.

Silver Fox dies in *Wolverine 64*, shipping October 13. Will Wolverine be able to contain his berserker rage?

Shipping on October 13, *Wonder Man 16* sees the villains coming to Wondey's rescue when he loses control: Crime boss Lotus unleashes L.A.'s latest protectors, Armed Response.

The Summer X-Over continues in *Uncanny X-Men 295*, shipping October 6. It's part 5 of 'X-ecutioner's Song', with Storm and Gold teamed up to battle Apocalypse, only to lose! *X-Factor 85* and *X-Men 15* continue the story, both shipping October 20. Jae Lee continues to pencil the former as Stryfe sacrifices his former followers to finish his vendetta against the X-Men. Andy Kubert takes the art chores of the latter as various X-folk systematically take apart the Mutant Liberation Front. Over in *X-Force 17*, shipping October 27, it's Apocalypse vs Stryfe. All four come poly-bagged with one of 12 different Stryfe's Strike List trading cards.

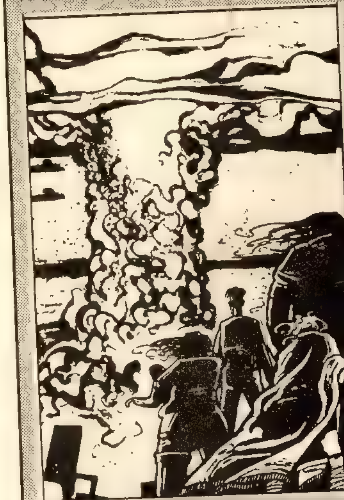
X-Men: The Animated Series 2 ships on October 20, which is when they face off the Sentinels and try to free Jubilee. And a team member dies!

And *X-Men Classics 78* ships on October 27, reprinting *Uncanny X-Men 174*.

If that's not enough X-citement for you, try *X-tinction Agenda*, a 224 page trade paperback collection, shipping October 13. X-Men team up with the New Mutants and X-Factor, all wrapped up in a cover that's threatening to blow your socks off!

EPIC NEWS

October sees the unique publication of *Dinosaurs: A Celebration*, a four-issue mini-series, all four parts to be issued simultaneously. Each issue is individually titled, as follows: *1: Terrible Claws & Tyrants*, 2: *Egg Stealers & Earth Shakers*, 3: *Boneheads & Duckbills*, and 4: *Horns & Heavy Armor*, with covers by UK stalwarts Kevin Walker, John Bolton, Garry Leach & Richard Dolan.



In fact its almost a UK talent Who's Who, the writers including Dan Abnett, Nick Vince & Graham Marks, and artists including Liam Sharp, Kevin Hopgood, Simon Bisley & Geoff Senior. *Dinosaurs* explores the pre-historical world, exploding the myths of whether dinosaurs were warm or cold blooded, why they became extinct, and how they evolved. Each fully painted issue is priced $4.95 and ships October 6.

Also making their debut this month are Andy Lanning, Dan Abnett & John Higgins on the three part *Mutatis*. A mutant virus is on the loose in the near future and one man is given the chance at the antidote, but on the condition that he kills other people infected by the virus.

Two graphic novels appear this month: *Sinking* by James Hudnall & Robert Ortelezah, the story of a man's descent into schizophrenia, and *67 Seconds* by James Robinson & Steve Yeowell, an action-adventure love story in which a man has just so long to save the life of the woman he loves.

A-1 also makes its American debut as a 4-part mini-series, thanks to editor Dave Elliott. The first issue, behind a Glenn Fabry cover, includes stories by P. Craig Russell, Scott Hampton, Ed Hillyer, and Roger Langridge.

Hellraiser: Book of the Damned 3 contains further extracts from the journal of Philip LeMarchand as seen by Dan Chichester, Mike Mignola & Mike McMahon.

Still with Clive Barker, *Nightbreed 22* has the conclusion of the 'Mad God Baphomet' storyline as Cabal and Baphomet battle the evil Ozymandias.

A new 4 part storyline begins in *Groo the Wanderer 96*, 'The Tasks of Groo', a homage to the 12 labours of Hercules. Expect Groo to foul it up royally.

Ted McKeever's *Metropol A.D.* concludes with this issue when the Angels take a daring chance with a nuclear arsenal.

Finnegar and Dalxtrey escape Randomearth YBY in *Onyx Overlord* (of 4) only to end up in the slave pen of the planet Onyx. But the major himself intervenes to save them...bu who will save the Major and the Airtight Garage?

William Shatner's Tekworld sees Jake reunited with his former lover, Warbride, but will she help h retrieve the anti-Tek-nology?

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DARK HORSE COMICS

DARK HORSE

Dark Horse lead this month with *Predator Vs. Magnus Robot Fighter*, a two-part co-production with Valiant featuring two licensed characters! A Predator stalks North Am in the year 4001 searching for a most prized trophy - the X-O Manowar helmet . . . but the stolen trophy has fallen into the hands of Magnus! Originally to be written by Jim Shooter, the series will now be written by John Ostrander, with art by Lee Weeks, colours by Janet Jackson, and cover art by Barry Windsor-Smith.

RoboCop begins a new four part adventure in *RoboCop: Prime Target* by John Arcudi and artists John Paul Leon & Jeff Albrecht in which crazy electronics genius Izzy is shot with RoboCop's gun - and only RoboCop can fire it!

Dr. Giggles is a two-part series, with both issues published in October to catch the film, to be released over Halloween. Dr. Giggles, currently running in *Dark Horse Presents*, is adapted by Steven Grant and drawn by Kent Burles & Alan Burrows.

The New Frontier is a three part mini-series based on a serial which ran in *Heavy Metal* by Michael Cherkas & John Sabljic in which the death of Rubi Fields plays a baffling role in a murder 30 years later.

Eric Shanower writes and draws *The Blue Witch of Oz*, based on the characters of L. Frank Baum made famous by the Judy Garland film of *The Wizard of Oz*. In this new story, Dorothy, the Scarecrow and the Glass Cat go in search of Abatha, the Good Witch of the East.

Baseball Greats 1: The Jimmy Pearsall Story is an authorised biography of the famous baseball player, scripted by John Arcudi, and drawn by Norm Dwyer over layouts by Paul Guinan, with a cover by Dave Dorman.

Concluding with this issue, *The American: Lost in America 4* has the American and his friends from the ape mask cult at with with the town of Lincoln, Oregon. Somehow, reporter Dennis Hough and the American's sometime girlfriend Candice Price have to keep the peace.

Swordswoman Mian Toris and her servants are sentenced to hang in *Caravan Kidd 4*, but as their execution approaches Bobo has to choose between hard cash and his friends.

Chevel Noir 35 features chapter 8 of 'The Man From Ciguri', the continuation of 'In Search of Peter Pan' by Cosey, the short story 'The Birthday' by Cossu & Jamsin, and David Lynch's 'Angriest Dog in the World'.

Luke volunteers for an espionage mission aboard Darth Vader's new battleship in *Classic Star Wars 3*, reprinting the Archie Goodwin/Al Williamson newspaper strip.

Meanwhile, *Dark Empire* concludes with issue 6, Tom Veitch & Cam Kennedy's new tale starring Luke and Co.

'Aliens: Horror Show' begins in *Dark Horse Comics 3*, written by Sarah Byam and drawn by David Roach, a three parter, and the first part of 'Indiana Jones & the Shrine of the Sea Devil' by Gary Gianni. RoboCop and Time Cop continue.

Dark Horse Presents 67 is a 64 page special which sees the first part of a Predator story by Andrew Vachss, adapted by Randy Stradley and artists Jordan Raskin & John Beatty. Also included are the conclusion of 'An Accidental Death', 'The Selfish Giant' by P. Craig Russell based on a story by Oscar Wilde, and other stories.

Eddie Campbell concludes *Deadface: Earth, Air, Fire, and Water* with issue 4 as Bacchus, Theseus and the gang manage a jail break in Sicily with the help of the Eyeball Kid.

Deadline USA 7 contains stories by Philp Bond, Scott Musgrove, Dave Cooper, D'Israeli, Ewins & Milligan, Shaky Kane and others.

The chase is still on in *Grendel: War Child 3* as the mysterious masked kidnapper and the heir to the throne steal through the Louisiana swamps, only to land on the doorstep of an old witch.

There are two classic Ogden Whitney tales in *Herbie 2*, plus an all new adventure by Tom McWeeney & Rich Hedden.

The Mask Returns returns with its second issue (of 4) in which the Mask heads out on a violent crime spree.

In John Byrne's *Next Men 8* the Next Men are sent to Russia to help the head of Omega project devise a solution to the Next Men's Russian counterparts.

Whilce Portacio and Les Dorscheid provide the cover for *Nexus the Liberator 3* (of 4). The politicians of Uyl are fighting for control of the planet while everyone else is fighting for their lives in a civil war sparked off by Nexus' execution of the Holy Gigo.

One of the Riven is set loose as *Primal* returns in a 4-part series, following from *Primal: From the Cradle to the Grave*. The new tale is by Clive Barker, D.G. Chichester & Erik Saltzgaber with painted art by Lionel Talaro.

Spacehawk returns with issue 4, starring Basil Wolverton's mysterious space hero who last appeared in 1990.

The Terminator: Endgame concludes with issues 2 and 3, written by James Robinson and drawn by Jackson Guice & John Beatty as the half-Terminator Dudley and Colonel Mary Randall are reunited and resume their quest to save Sarah Connor and ensure the birth of her son, John. The climax takes place at Odessa Hospital on the day of John's birth.

The Thing: Climate of Fear concludes with issue 4 when MacReady discovers that the Thing has been busy building a ship, and it's up to him to destroy the alien before it can reach a more populated area.

Venus Wars II 5 sees Matthew and Lupica tracked down by Helen MacLuth of the Terran Space Force.

The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles 9 takes a step backwards to 1908 when the young Indy fell in love with the beautiful daughter of the Archduke Ferdinand, ruler of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

IMAGE

October's biggie from Image is Wetworks by Whilce Portacio, Brendon Choi & Scott Williams, a three-issue mini-series which introduces Team 7, a government sponsored military team with enhanced powers and protected from injury by what Portacio describes as "a sentient liquid metal life-form". Led by Jackson Dane, the team includes reconnaissance scout Pilgrim, and two strike teams, Grail & Dozer, and Jester & Claymore, plus a "half-human, half-cyborg" executive in charge of communications. After countless bloody confrontations they are faced with enemies to which death has little meaning - the teams' mysterious patron renames it Wetworks – CIA slang for covert operations involving close quarters killing where the operative's hands get wet from blood.

Elsewhere in the Image universe, Brigade comes to a close with issue 4; Marc Silvestri's Cyberforce 3 *guest-stars Bedrock from* Youngblood*; in* Shadowhawk 3 *Jim Valentino introduces a mysterious killer called Liquid Fire;* Spawn 6 *guest stars Overkill, created by Todd McFarlane, Rob Liefeld & Stan Lee for the video* Comic Book Greats, *as Spawn takes on the New York mafia; and Supreme confronts his oldest and most formidable foe in* Supreme 2.

TUNDRA

If you liked Enemy Ace: War Idyll, you're in for a treat in October as Tundra release *No Man's Land*, a 112 page full colour and duotone book featuring a wealth of sketches, full paintings and behind-the-scenes preparations for George Pratt's critically acclaimed World War 1 book. Also included are verse and snatches of prose drawn from

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TUNDRA *– continued*

sources used by Pratt during his research. A softcover edition is available for $14.95 (£9.95) and as a limited, signed hardcover for $50.00 (£31.00).

Mr Monster Attacks 3 is the final issue and features stories by Mr Monster creator, Michael T. Gilbert, Dave Gibbons, Dave Dorman, Tom Buss, and Bob Supina.

Tantalizing Stories 1 comes hot on the heels of *Frank in the River* and features more by the team of Mark Martin & Jim Woodring. This is the first of a bi-monthly b&w series starring Frank and Montgomery Wart, with Frank visiting the House of the Dead and Montgomery learning that Halloween pranks can have consequences.

'The Belly of the Dragon' is the title for book two of *Wind of the Gods*, a 48 page hardcover collection by Cathias & Adamov, which sees Tchen Qin suffer his first defeat - betrayed by his companions, the invincible Samurai enters the kingdom of the dead and begins a desperate battle against the powers of the abyss.

In 1933, two kids from Slumburg conjure up True-Man, but given life he's about to change the world forever. *The Maximortal 2* also contains 'Rare Bit Fiends', another trip into Rick Veitch's twisted subconscious.

Legends of Arzach reaches issue 5, a gallery of interpretations of the famous Moebius character. This issue sees Simon Bisley, Kevin Eastman, Cam Kennedy, Mark Bode, Jim Fitzpatrick, Jerry Bingham, Sergio Aragones, and Dean Motter, plus previously unpublished work by Moebius.

Saving the best till last, *Cages 6* is released this month, Dave McKean's multi-layered look at life, love, and art. We don't often recommend titles as part of our news service, but this is one we would suggest you take a good look at.

FLEETWAY

Fleetway launch two new reprint titles in October: Young Death by John Wagner & Peter Doherty, and Harlem Heroes by Michael Fleisher & Steve Dillon, both reprinted from the pages of 2000AD.

Cybercrush 14 is the final issue, bringing the Ro-Busters to a close with a tale by Alan Moore, and Robo-Hunter ends his war against the robot mafia.

DC NEWS

SUPERMAN – DEAD

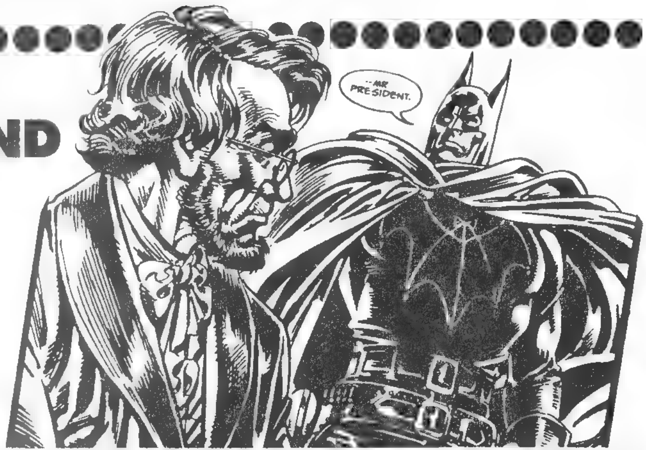
Superman 75 will present the devastating conclusion of the 'Doomsday' series which will run through the four Superman titles. The storyline continues through *Superman: The Man of Steel 19*, shipping November 10 and the aforementioned *Superman 75*, shipping November 17.

Written and pencilled by Dan Jurgens with inks by Brett Breeding the grand finale is an all splash-page issue as Superman gives his life to save Metropolis. The issue will be available in the normal newsstand edition plus a special polybagged Collectors Edition, with different covers but a similar foldout inside back cover. The direct market edition will include a poster of Superman's funeral, Superman's obituary from the *Daily Planet*, a commemorative mock postage stamp, and an armband made from ribbon and featuring the Superman shield.

The story leads into a eight-part storyline entitled 'Funeral For A Friend' which has a start in *Justice League America 70* (shipping November 17) and continues in *Adventures of Superman 498* and *Action Comics 685*, shipping November 24 and December 1 respectively.

Also available this month will be a black commemorative Superman T-Shirt and the trade paperback version of the *Worlds Finest* 3 part prestige series by Dave Gibbons, Steve Rude and Karl Kesel, with a new painted cover by Rude.

BATMAN IN ELSEWORLDS AND ELSEWHERE


...MR PRESIDENT.

Two new Elseworlds volumes will be appearing in November, one each for Batman and Robin, the latter as a two part mini-series.

The first, entitled Robin 3000 *is set in a future where the Batman of the era lies dead, and civilisation's only hope against the group known as the Skulpt lies with the boy who vows to carry on his mentor's crusade. Written by Byron Preiss (of Byron Preiss Visual Productions) and drawn by P. Craig Russell, the first Prestige Format issue ships on November 10, the second on November 24.*

The Blue, the Grey and the Bat *is a 64-page Prestige Format Batman Elseworlds tale set in the days of the American Civil War wherein the Batman of the time is on a dangerous mission for President Lincoln. His alter-ego, Bruce Wayne, is a staunch Unionist, and is supported by his servant and friend, Alfred, and his partner, Redbird. Alan Weiss pencils and Jose Luis Garcia-Lopez inks Elliott S. Maggin's story shipping November 17.*

The secret origin of Ra's al Ghul is revealed in Batman: Birth of the Demon, *a 112-page graphic novel written by Dennis O'Neil and drawn by Norm Breyfogle, his first fully painted work on the character. Ships December 8, priced $24.95.*

And a new villain is added in Batman: Vengeance of Bane, *the sole survivor of the Venom Experiments which were revealed in* Legends of the Dark Knight 16-20. *An attempt to create a drug-enhanced killer, Bane has spent his life in a South American island prison, and now has his eyes set on Gotham. Shipping December 8,* Vengeance of Bane *is a 64-page one-shot written by Chuck Dixon and drawn by Graham Nolan & Eduardo Barretto.*

DC ROUND-UP

Dudley abducts Cliff and brings him to the grisly House of Death in *Animal Man 55*, part 5 of 'Flesh and Blood', shipping November 24.

Part 2 of 'Misfits' sees Jim Gordon, Bruce Wayne and Mayor Armand Krol kidnapped. It's up to Robin to save the day in *Shadow of the Bat 8*, shipping November 10.

Batman: Sword of Azrael concludes on November 10 with issue 4, as the three-way conflict between Batman, Azrael and the demon Biis ends in a fiery climax. The story leads into *Batman 488*, shipping November 17.

Legends of the Dark Knight 41 is the one-off 'Sunset' written and drawn by the new *Scarlett* team, Tom Joyner, K.S. Wilson & Jim Fern. Batman enters an abandoned movie studio and it's up to fearless vampire-hunter, Alfred, to save the day. The day is November 24.

'The General' storyline continues in *Detective 655*, shipping December 1, the gentleman of the title uniting the gangs of Gotham as Batman tries to identify the mysterious figure.

The Batman Adventures 4, shipping December 8, has Marty Pasko and Brad Rader direct from the animated series writing and pencilling this and the next few issues; 'Riot Act' sees Gotham amidst a sudden plague of illiteracy.

And for Robin fans, *Robin III: Cry of the Huntress 2* (of 6) has Robin in a face-off with the KGBeast. This issue comes in both newsstand and collector's editions, the latter with a movement enhanced cover, plus a mini-poster by Mike Zeck. Both ship November 10. Another pair ship December 1 when issue 3 has King Snake after a piece of the KGBeast's turf.

Black Canary gets her own ongoing series, launched on November 17, the first 3-part storyline telling how Dinah Lance is forced to relive her origin whilst investigating a rash of homicides. Sarah E. Byam (of *Billi 99*) writes, and Trevor Von Eeden & Bob Smith draw.

Black Condor 8, shipping November 24, has the Condor cited for contempt as he testifies in court; he'll have to escape jail to stop the payroll crook from issue 1 going after the only witness.

In *Congorilla 3* (of 4), shipping November 24, Congo Bill may have to give up his humanity to stop the rampaging Congorilla.

The threat of Evil Star escalates in *Darkstars 4*: amidst the spread of the Loco drug, Carla confronts

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Pappas and becomes aware of his evil game. This issue, shipping December 1, introduces new penciller Travis Charest.

Deadman: Exorcism concludes with issue 2 as Deadman confronts a soul-shattering secret from his past. Ships December 1.

Deathstroke leads a Brotherhood of Evil team in a raid to steal nuclear warheads from Russia in *Deathstroke, the Terminator 18*, shipping November 10.

Lobo guests in *Demon 31*, shipping November 17, as Jason Blood returns to Hell to retrieve the soul of the increasingly obnoxious Harry the Pillow.

Grant Morrison's reign comes to a close with *Doom Patrol 63*, shipping December 1, with a 32 page no-ads issue. This issue includes a preview of new *Doom Patrol* writer, Rachel Pollack's opening story.

Eclipso 3 guest stars Amanda Waller and Cave Carson as Bruce Gordon assembles an elite group to oppose Eclipso. Ships November 17.

Flash struggles to protect a state informant from the wrath of the Alchemist in *Flash 72*, shipping November 10.

The 'Reunion Tour' comes to an end in *Green Arrow 70*, shipping December 1. The Electric Unicorns are being slaughtered one by one, and it's up to Oliver and his Merry Men to save the day.

Green Lantern Archives Volume 1 is a 224-page, $39.95 hardcover which includes the added bonus of having some pages photographed from the original artwork. The stories are from the pages of *Showcase 22-24* and *Green Lantern 1-5*, and introduce Hal Jordan, the classic Silver Age Green Lantern with art by the incomparable Gil Kane.

Over in *Green Lantern: Mosaic 8*, a more modern John Stewart must find a way to communicate with a species of ethereal creatures before their hypnotising music causes one race to kill another. Ships November 10.

'The Third Law' comes to an end in *Green Lantern 35*, shipping November 24: Entropy and the Soldiers of the Dark arrive on Oa to confront the Guardians.

Ex-Lantern *Guy Gardner* is the target of an assassin in issue 4 of his own title, and it may well be the final fight between Guy and Ice on December 8.

The Hacker Files 6 ships on November 17, part two of 'Operation: Moonwitch', with guest stars Green Lantern, Catherine Colbert of the JLE, and Oracle, Barbara Gordon, the former Batgirl.

Hammerlocke 5 has Hammerlocke fighting for his life while Cactus Jaq and Sahara Skyhawk attempt to rescue his kidnapped daughter. One of them will not survive; you'll find out who on November 17.

'Flight's End' reaches part 4 in *Hawkworld 30*, shipping November 10, and marks the return of Timothy Truman as penciller as Hawkman and Hawkwoman take refuge in the Netherworld.

The Heckler 5 ships November 17, an all-singing, all-dancing, all-mayhem issue!

'Guys and Dolls' concludes in *Hellblazer 61* on November 17 as Contantine heads for a confrontation with the First of the Fallen.

Justice League Europe face a 'Red Winter' in issue 46 (shipping December 1), part two of the storyline which takes us up to issue 50. They're held captive in Russia, while a mystery villain continues his diabolical plans.

The JSA travel to Badnesia to solve the mystery of the missing Badnesians in *Justice Society of America 6*, shipping December 1.

Following the destruction of Earth, the Legion and other survivors reflect upon the past and the uncertain future. *Legion of Super-Heroes 39*, shipping November 17, also introduces penciller Stuart Immonen.

L.E.G.I.O.N. '92 #49 ships on November 24, with Stealth going undercover as a slave to investigate a ring of slavers. And Lobo makes an appearance.

Cyborg returns to Russia in *The New Titans 94*, shipping November 17, only to find a figure from Red Star's past has planned an ominous fate for him. Plus: romance is in the air for Nightwing and Mirage, and for Terra and Gar!

The Sandman 45 ships on November 17, the fifth part of 'Brief Lives'. Dream and Delirium search for Destruction in a most unlikely old haunt - a strip joint.

DC's entry into the vampire market (a bite at the market maybe?) arrives December 8 with *Scarlett*, a new ongoing monthly written by Tom Joyner & K.S. Wilson, and drawn by Jim Fern. Scarlett are a band of super-powered vampire hunters led by a reluctant heroine, Bly Pharis, the Scarlet Redeemer.

Shade the Changing Man 31 is the first of a two-parter, 'Ernest and Jim', pencilled by Coleen Doran: Shade finds himself in Paris in the 1920s and in the company of Ernest Hemingway and James Joyce.

The famous *Showcase* returns for 1993 with the not-unsurprisingly entitled *Showcase '93*, a twelve-issue maxi-series showcasing a new Batman related story in each issue. The first features Catwoman in a 4-parter by Doug Moench & Ed Hannigan. Blue Devil starts a six-issue run by Dan Mishkin, Gary Cohn, Pete Moriarty & Dan Davis, whilst Cyborg gets a solo story away from the Titans, written by Len Wein and drawn by Phil Jiminez & Al Vey. Arthur Adams & Terry Austin provide the cover.

Confronted by an agonised soul, The Spectre is moved to discover the identity of the ghost's murderer in *The Spectre 2*, shipping November 10.

Star Trek 42 ships on November 10: McCoy and Scotty get mixed up in a fanatic cult on an unsafe ship, and offering a helping hand only leads to more hazards than they bargained for.

Over in *Star Trek: The Next Generation 42*, shipping a fortnight later, sees Dr. Crusher's away team make a startling discovery.

The 2nd volume of *Streets* is entitled 'Procurement', written by James Hudnall and drawn by Rob Ortaleza, the story of con-man Eric Foster who angles in on a video pornography/prostitution racket, rubbing the wrong people up the wrong way. Ships December 8.

Swamp Thing 127 promises to be a turning point as the Sunderland Corporation unleash Project Proteus. Who will Swamp Thing choose between his duties to the Green and his duties as husband and father? November 24 may answer the question.

Donna and Terry have high hopes of a new life in *Team Titans 5*, shipping November 24, but Battalion arrives to take charge, and a new romantic triangle emerges.

Krater wants to be London's deadliest new villain, and intends to trash the city's newest hero: *Peter Cannon - Thunderbolt 5* ships on November 10.

Timber Wolf has been mistaken for The Creeper! Jack Ryder travels to San Francisco to investigate, leading to an all-out battle in *Timber Wolf 3*, shipping December 1.

Valor 3 begins the two-part 'She's the One' on November 10. Valor puts his new ship, Pilgrim One, through its paces, while his earlier duel with White Spider leads to an encounter with Lobo, who makes a cameo here before becoming a major part of the action next month.

'Exodus in Space' concludes with Diana's return to Earth, only to face the consequences of her year-long absence. *Wonder Woman 70* ships November 10.

VALIANT

The lead title this month is *Predator vs Magnus Robot Fighter*, which you'll find with co-publishers, Dark Horse's listing.

The departure of Jim Shooter from the company has meant a shake-up in the credits for various titles, which include the arrival of John Ostrander as writer for the aforementioned crossover, and the regular *Magnus Robot Fighter* monthly. Barry Windsor-Smith will be writing and pencilling *Eternal Warrior* as well as *Archer & Armstrong*, whilst David Lapham will add the writing duty to his regular pencilling of *Harbinger*. Bob Hall will be writing and pencilling *Shadowman*. Got that?

October will see a crossover between *X-O Manowar 12* and *Solar, Man of the Atom 17*, as well as the release of the *Unity Trading Cards* - 90 cards, with a special six chromium cards which will introduce new upcoming characters, the first of which, *Bloodshot*, will debut in November.

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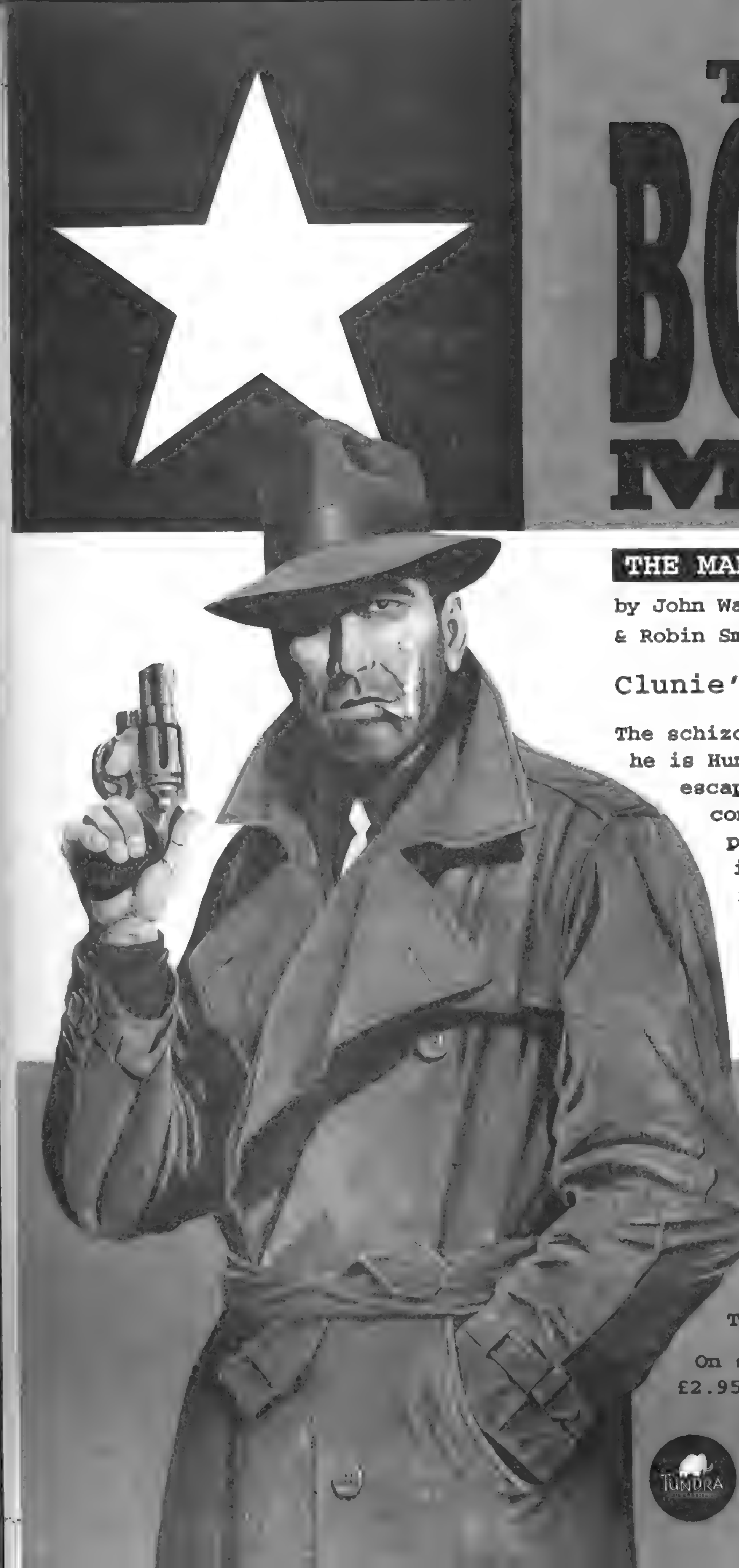

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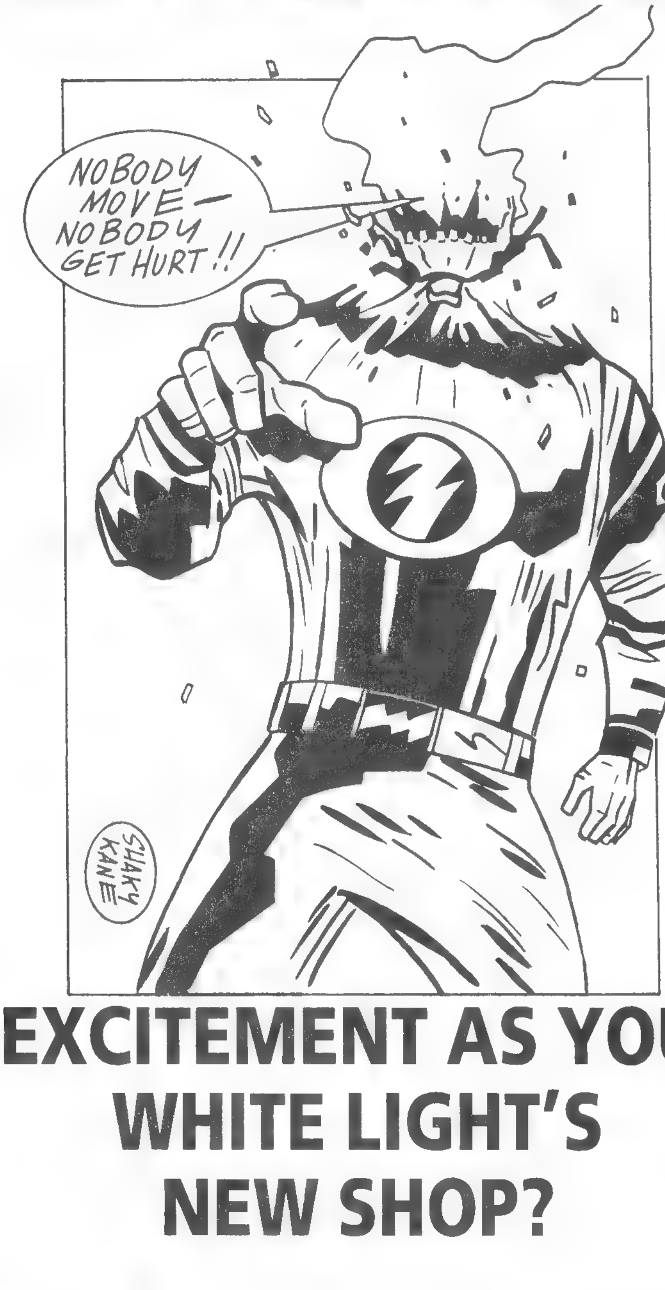
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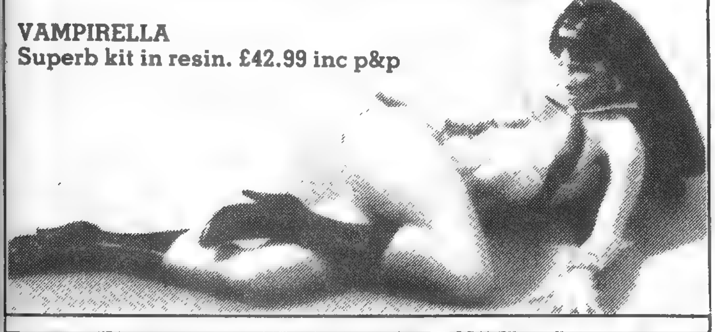

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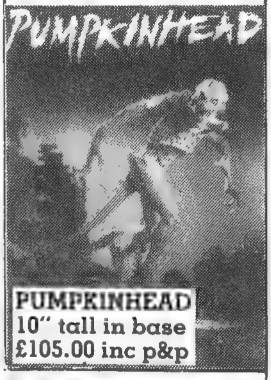

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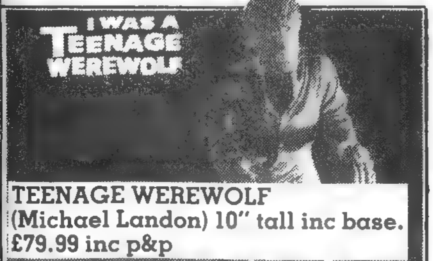

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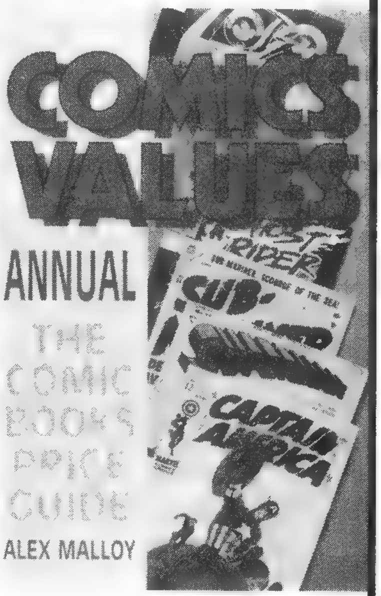

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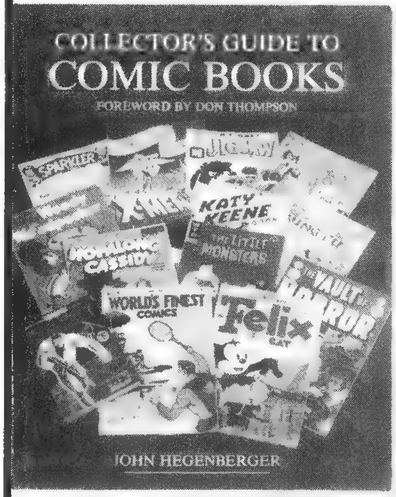

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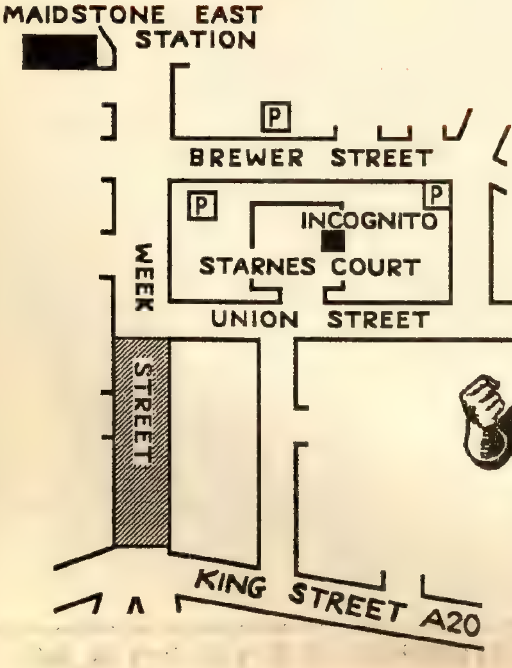
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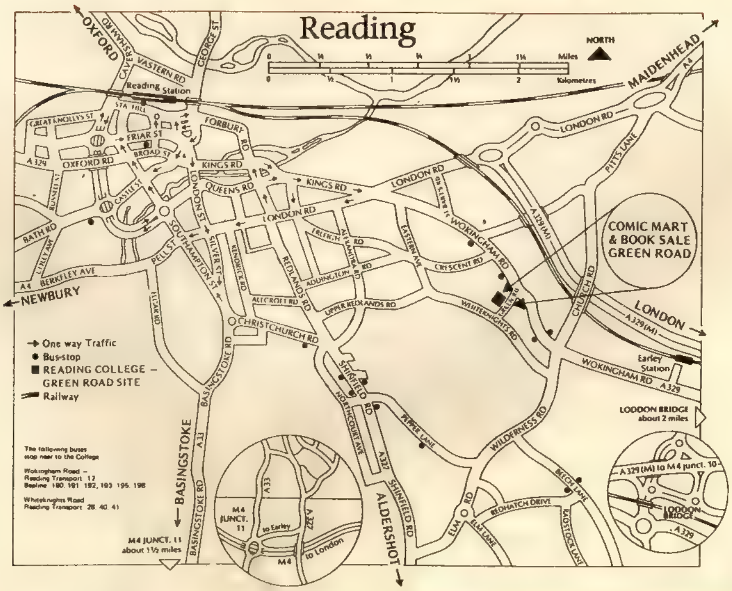
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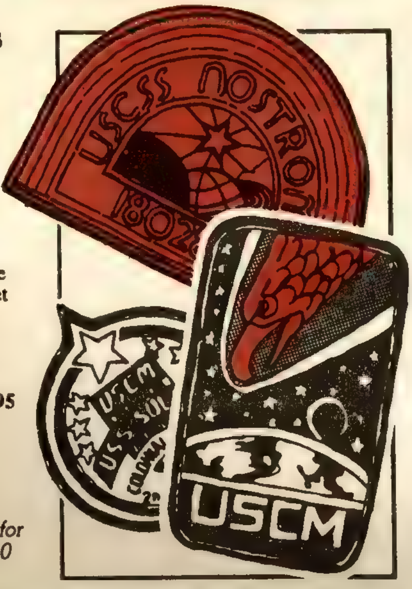
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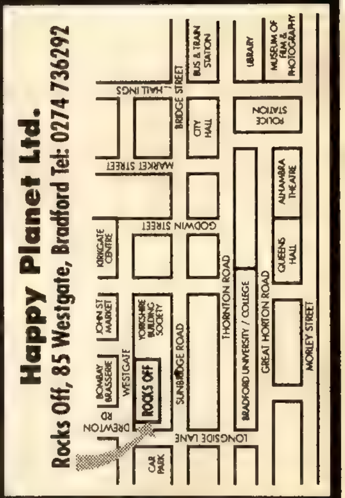
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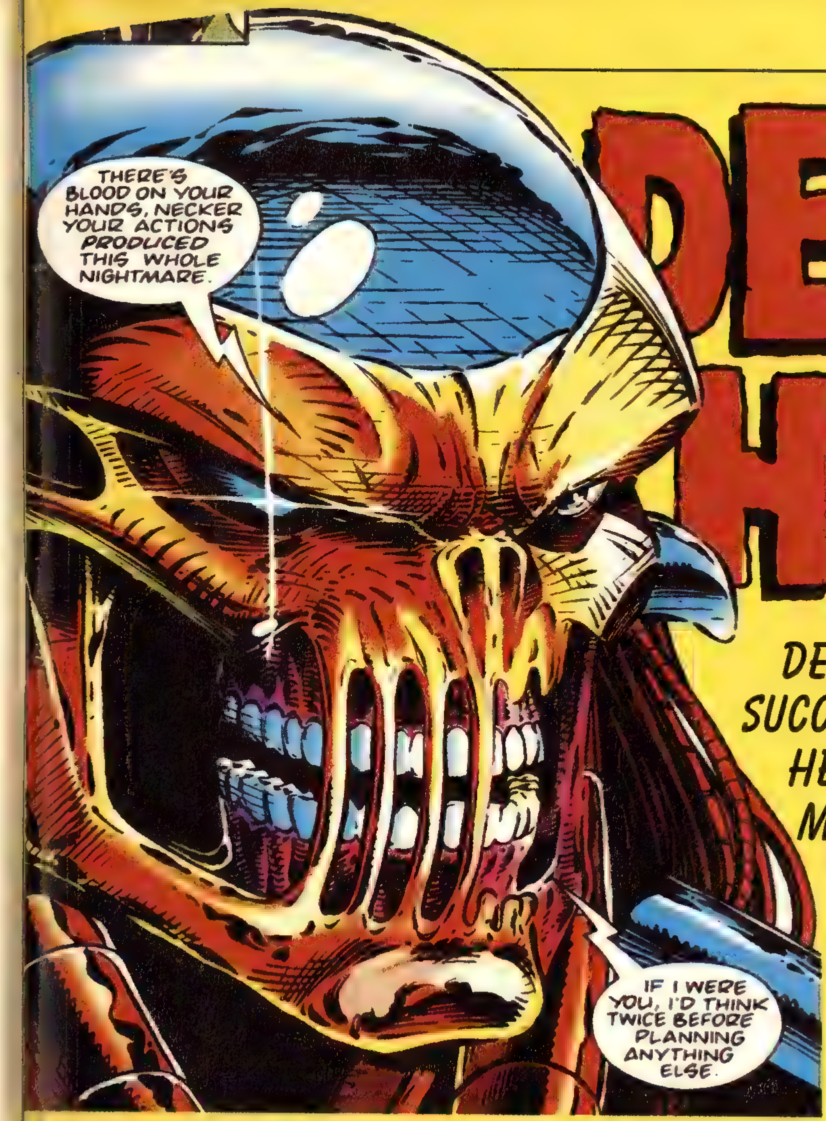
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DEATH'S HEAD LIVES! AFTER A RUNAWAY SUCCESS IN THE USA FOR THE MINI-SERIES, HE'S BACK IN HIS OWN ONGOING MONTHLY AND A SLEW OF OTHER TITLES. ALAN WOOLLCOMBE LOOKS BEHIND THE HEAD-LINES, YES?

MISSED HIM YES? BUT NOT BY MUCH

Remember Death's Head? No, not that funny-looking reject-robot bounty hunter who somehow strayed into the Marvel Universe with about as much menace as the Care Bears. We mean Marvel UK's very own serial killer cyborg, the half-man with the 106 personalities and some of the biggest sales on the block, whose new, full-time series starts next month.

Death's Head owes his resurrection initially to two men, Paul Neary and Liam Sharp. When Neary was appointed editorial director of Marvel UK in April 1991, he found a dormant company botching its way through: "First of all, in general everything was looking ten years out of date – the ideas had gone stale, people were on tickover, and there were very cosy little groups of editors and writers and artists, none of whom were really calling each other on the ordinariness of what they were doing. Everything needed rerouting."

Symptomatic of Marvel's malaise was the tired and old-fashioned original Death's Head concept: "When I first got here, a new series was already being solicited and there was no point in not going through with it. On the other hand, I didn't like the pages that had been produced – I didn't think there was much future in Transformers-based robots and I thought we could do an awful lot better." Nonetheless Neary was having a tough time trying to breathe life into Death's Head until Liam Sharp presented his concept sketch.

THE LIMITED SERIES

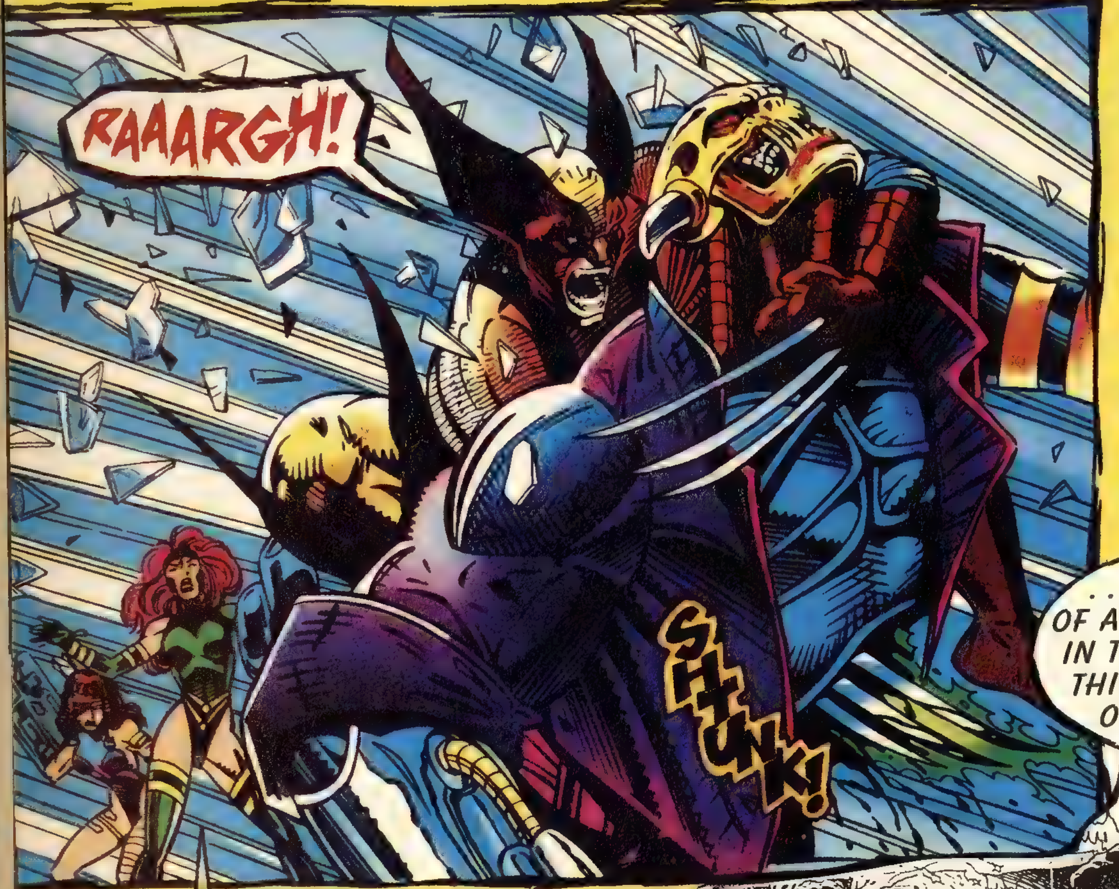
Luck was with Neary and Marvel: Sharp, who had previously worked for *2000AD* doing Judge Dredd and for Marvel on various titles, including the original *Death's Head* mini-series, was shown some sample sketches of how Neary saw the Death's Head android. Liam Sharp takes up the story: "Paul said that with a name like Death's Head, it should be some sort of image of death, a skull suspended in a mass of metal. I always thought that the character didn't look heavy or dangerous enough, and he certainly didn't look like the killer bounty hunter he was meant to be. Anyway, I took Paul's beetle-like images with pincers (which I turned into the downturned horns) and did a sketch."

It was the inspiration Neary was looking for. "The project was really given a kickstart by Liam's input. When he turned up with that design, it was quite obviously based on contemporary film-type imagery of stuff that was big now, so of course it was a step in the right direction."

This was more than just usual comic company hyperbole. On the strength of that one pencil drawing (a head-on character design) and what amounted to little more than a statement of intent promising a savage overhaul of the character, Marvel resolicited the title with the American distributors and increased the advance orders from 30,000 to nearly 70,000. As Neary concedes, "That was when the alarm bells went off that there was room for improvement."

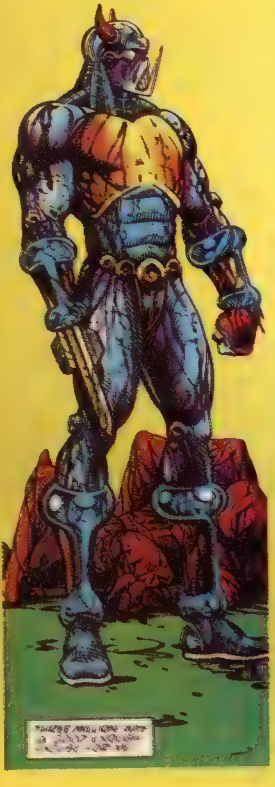
A further windfall was to come: at a Marvel America sales conference in Florida, instead of being relegated to the sidelines, Neary's new baby was given centre stage as part of the American Big Guns promotion for 1992. Orders again leapt heavenwards. Scarcely able to believe that after years of half-hearted struggling Marvel UK had finally hit the big time, Neary and crew set to work to make the most of their bonanza.

It was not just serendipity, however.


RAAARGH!
SHTUNK!

Above: Wolverine gets his claws into Death's Head

Centre: Wrap-round cover for DHII issue 1 by Liam Sharp & Paul Neary. Top right: pages from DHII by Liam Sharp & Cam Smith



Neary had devoted a lot of thought to the company's future and to his role as viceroy of Marvel's British empire. "We have been trying to address the whole difference between the British market and the American market: at any given point we have to make a decision which market we are going into with what material. I don't think there is much of a crossover – in order to successfully publish in both countries, we are adjusting the line-up and the creators that we are using. We have several artists and writers who are able to perform in either market but I think it is still important to aim at one market or the other. In the case of *Death's Head II* we just went for broke in America and we had a good deal of success."

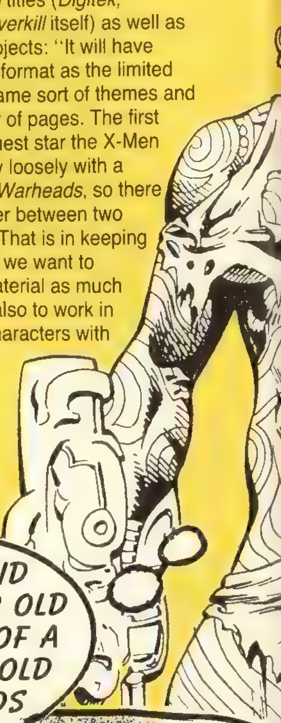
With typical Neary understatement, that "good deal of success" signified the highest ever sales for a Marvel UK title: "After reprinting the first two issues, we ended up with pretty well a quarter of a million on the first one, the second two slightly down on that and the last one well above 200,000. For Marvel UK that's astonishingly good." So much so, in fact, that mentions of a possible trade paperback reprint only elicit a smile rather than an outright dismissal.

More concrete tokens of the limited series' success, are however, readily evidenced by the slew of new Death's Head-oriented projects soon to be released over the next few months. In addition to a new regular series, which is prequeled in Marvel UK's *Warheads* title, Death's Head is to co-star alongside the manic assassin Killpower in *Battletide*, will play a big part in the forthcoming *MyS-TECH Wars* book drawn by Bryan Hitch.

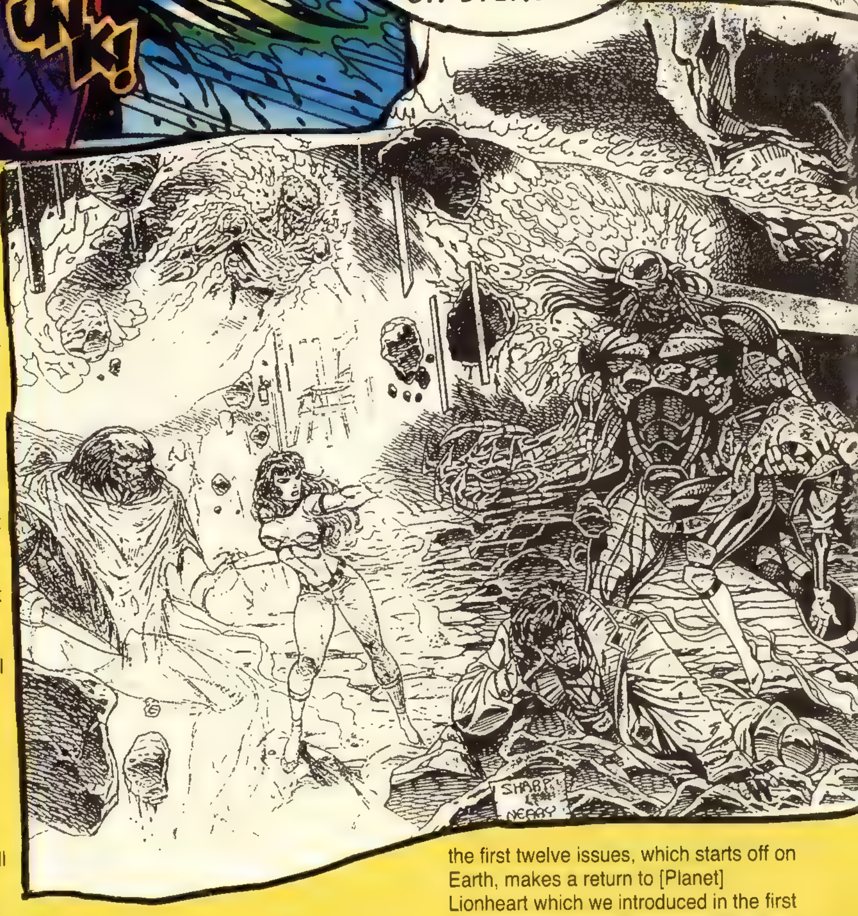
THE HEAD-LINES

The main event in all this activity has to be Death's Head's new eponymous title, which in all vital respects boasts the same creative line-up as before: Dan (*Knights of Pendragon*) Abnett as writer, Liam Sharp as penciller, Andy (*Digitek*) Lanning on inks (initially, at least) and John Freeman as editor.

Also unchanged is the limited series' winning formula, according to series' editor Freeman, a Marvel veteran also responsible for *Doctor Who Magazine* and three *Overkill* titles (*Digitek*, *Warheads* and *Overkill* itself) as well as five other new projects: "It will have exactly the same format as the limited series, with the same sort of themes and the same number of pages. The first four issues will guest star the X-Men and will tie in very loosely with a theme started in *Warheads*, so there will be a crossover between two Marvel UK titles. That is in keeping with the idea that we want to interrelate our material as much as possible and also to work in our Marvel UK characters with the American super-heroes for maximum exposure. We've got a very open game plan for the first twelve issues, which starts off on Earth, makes a return to [Planet] Lionheart which we introduced in the first mini-series to wrap up some of [Death's Head's sidekick] Tuck's background then comes round full circle to events partly taking place back on Earth in a contemporary setting."



. . . THE MIND OF A TEN YEAR OLD IN THE BODY OF A THIRTY YEAR OLD ON STEROIDS



For Liam Sharp, who spent a year as assistant to the legendary British artist Don Lawrence and was schooled in the works of European illustrators, the American style which the strip demands came as both a revelation and a return to his roots. "Paul showed me a lot of American stuff which I hadn't seen, because I'd been very much rooted in the European stuff for a long time and was

completely out of touch with the American side. He dug out some of Jim Lee's Savage Land from *X-Men* and, as soon as I saw it, I thought 'This is the way I want to go'. The funny thing was, it was like coming full circle because that's where I'd started. It was a real breath of fresh air to come back to it: for the first time ever, I've really been enjoying drawing stuff."

However, Sharp contends that he is no mere Jim Lee copyist: "Hopefully what I learnt in the mini-series was how to get a lot more dynamic, how to draw a much more varied array of figures. I think that by the time I got to issue four I was getting much more of a handle on the American way of doing things. It was very much geared towards the American market and I'm trying to get that in-house American style in my own artwork. At the moment there are a lot of people drawing in that style, and it is unfair to say you are drawing like Jim Lee, because nothing I have done is a direct copy."

Just as grim and gritty was the password for the character's transfiguration, so the idiosyncratic light comedy feel of the original Death's Head was transmogrified into something of a decidedly darker hue. "Dan, Liam and I all sat down for issue two of the mini-series which is when I took over the editing side," Freeman reveals, "and worked out all the silliness-type stuff, so as to give the new Death's Head his own much more cynical brand of humour." But he does still come out with his irritating old funny query, yes? "Very rarely, once an issue at the most I hope – there is still just that little hint of it because the old Death's Head is in there somewhere."

For Freeman the strip is very much a co-operative effort. "We are working on the British method of full script, but not hard and fast. We run the plot by everybody involved on the creative side, Paul included. If, for example, a script page comes in and Liam suggests an alteration, we'll make a change at the artwork stage and then send the page back to Dan [Abnett] so he can rework any dialogue. Obviously, there my be last minute changes we don't have time to run past the writer, as there would be with any TV production. But Dan's brilliant about that sort of thing and he hasn't hit me yet. He's also a very good superhero writer, which is a bonus."

The overall direction of the strip is likewise subject to steerage by committee, Paul Neary, the man at the helm of Marvel, divulges: "It is subdivided down. Everyone knows that I don't want it to end up in Camden Town Woolworths, say. John and Dan will sort out what they think is a good direction for it to go, and I might be there or I might not, and then I get to see it at a very early stage. A good way to get good work out of people is to let them choose the things they want to work on, so part of my duties is to keep an eye out for when creators are getting bored."

WAR ZONE

Galvanised out of retirement by the cyborg's success, however, Marvel's antennae know a hot property when they see one and have drafted in a couple of team-up books to catch the tide, with the first, *Battle Tide: Death's Head vs Killpower* written by the ubiquitous Dan Abnett and Andy Lanning and drawn by Geoff (*Hell's Angel*) Senior, due out a mere couple of weeks after the regular title. Killpower, another grotesque from the *Overkill* stable, is in Marvel's own words "a genetic cocktail or orangutan, lemur, bat, gorilla, rhinoceros and human, created to become the ultimate assassin" and blessed with a host of anti-social traits and abilities (the mind of a ten year old in the body of a thirty year old on steroids, "mystically empowered with an innate understanding of the most complex biological and mechanical systems including future weaponry", believes that killing is a social pastime, etc, etc . .). Needless to say, fisticuffs and sales galore are anticipated when these two meet.

The real hot mover, however, and the one which Marvel UK in their most optimistic scenarios could not have envisioned before this year, has to be a *Secret Wars* type mini-series planned for release in January 1993. Under the working title *The MyS-TECH Wars*, this mass crossover in four chapters will be penned by Dan Abnett and pencilled by Bryan (*She-Hulk*) Hitch and is intended to embrace not just Death's Head and all the heroes from *Overkill*, but most of the main American Marvel long underwear brigade too.

As the series' provisional name indicates, the evil MyS-TECH organisation is the cause of the strife. "The whole idea has been to have MyS-TECH be the rationalizing factor of all the comics that we are doing," Paul Neary explains. "MyS-TECH are in England and they had to have some sort of contact with the American heroes. Across the rest of the line of books, by now the Americans are picking up signals: in the case of Hell's Angel, for instance, Professor Xavier [of the X-Men] is onto her as a possible new mutant. Obviously, MyS-TECH can't go on annoying the American heroes year after year without it coming to a head."

Potential reader dissatisfaction was another factor in demanding some sort of resolution, too. "What we have decided is to have a real confrontation between Nick Fury and Crowe of the main MyS-TECH board, whom we have established met back in the Second World War (although Fury doesn't remember it). A key event will take place between the two, and pretty well all the American universe, as well as Death's Head and our other heroes, will be involved. At that point we have got something which we cannot really deal with in normal continuity, hence the mini-series." Death's Head, as a semi-detached but bona fide *Overkill* hero, will play a prominent part.

But the dernier cri in all this and proof positive that the world has finally succumbed to a rush to the Head is this: Marvel is bringing back the old Death's Head in November in a 12-part series entitled *The Incomplete Death's Head* that reprints most of his, er, picaresque escapades. Now that takes confidence. **CW**

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2. **Who did the character designs for the new look Death's Head?**
3. **Name Death's Head's salacious side-kick.**

Usual Competition rules apply.

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Death's Head © Marvel Comics

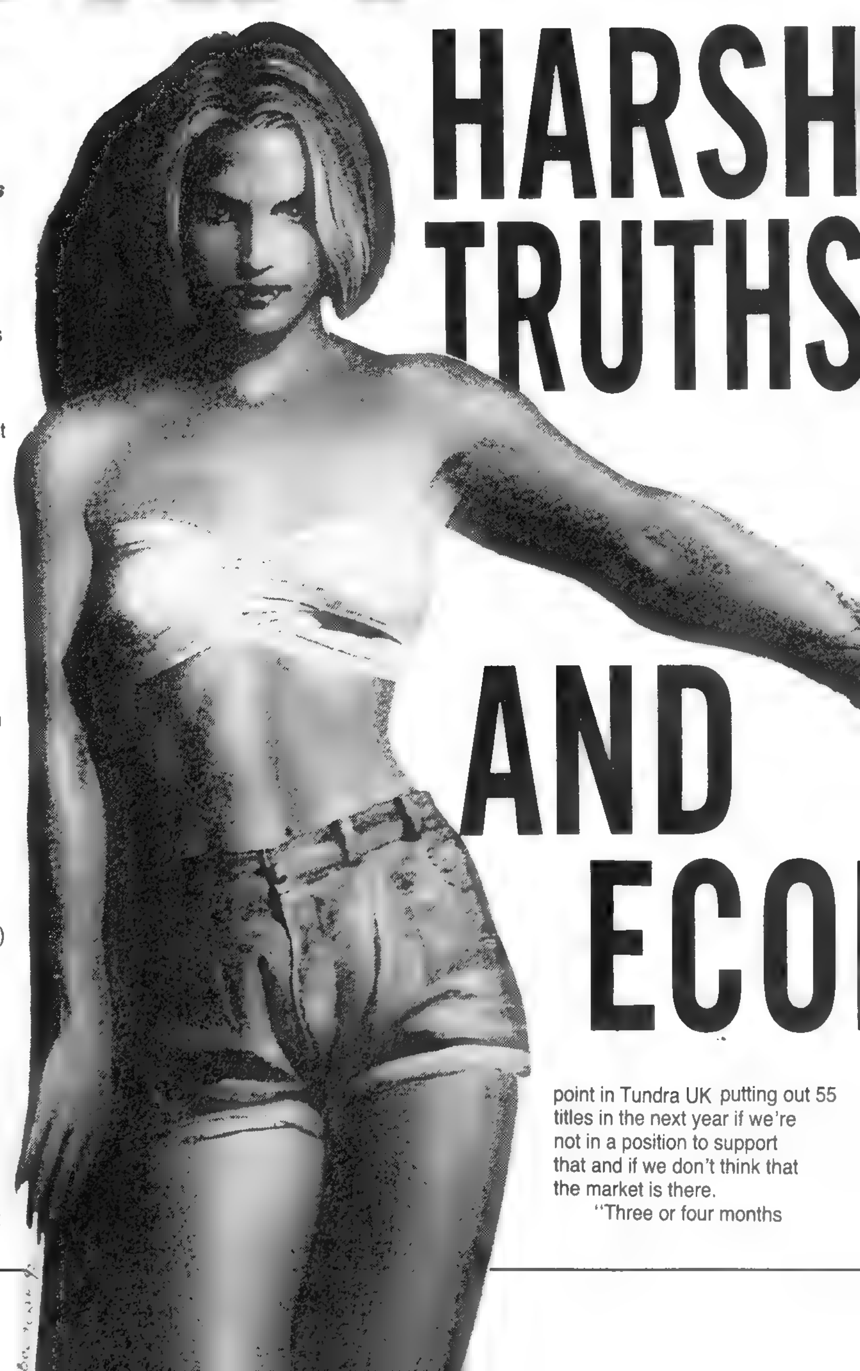
TUNDRA- HARSH TRUTHS AND ECO

FRANK WYNNE EXPLAINS THE RECENT PROBLEMS FACED BY TUNDRA PUBLISHING AND PUTS TO REST SOME OF THE RUMOURS

> PEOPLE ALMOST **WILL** COMPANIES TO FAIL, AND ALMOST MORE SO IN THE CASE OF TUNDRA

So much can happen in eight months. Time moves so fast. Eight months ago, we were putting together the first issue of* Comic Collector*, amongst the contents a look at the shining "creator-driven" rolls-royce of a company that was about to hit the scene: Tundra Publishing UK. A shiny new editor went to visit the shiny new offices to report on developing plans for what promised to be the most eclectic line of comic strips any publisher was planning to offer an audience.

Time moves on. Eight months later, and your slightly faded editor is up at the crack of noon (well, it was Saturday) to catch Tundra's Mr. P.R., Frank Wynne before he jets off to San Diego, both of us still shell-shocked from the Press Launch of* Skin *the previous Thursday evening, the subject: the recent reports of Tundra's imminent collapse, and other curious rumours.



Art: (above) D'Israeli (right) John Bolton, (top right) David Hine, Simon Bisley, Martin Edmond

Tundra Publishing was set up by Kevin Eastman in 1990, following the phenominal success of the *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*. The British end was conceived a year ago at the 1991 San Diego convention when Kevin met Dave Elliott, although the setting-up of the company – finding staff, offices and (most importantly) projects to work on – took the best part of six months. By February, a line of titles had been formulated and announced, the first scheduled for publication in June. Time moved on, but nothing appeared, at least, not in the UK. The company moved offices in July, earlier than anticipated, and found itself without phones. Then, silence. And then, rumours.

"The rumours spread not so much from that but from the general death wish that influences comics," says Wynne. "I'm not quite sure why this is. People almost *will* companies to fail, and probably more so in the case of Tundra because Tundra had made greater claims for itself."

The chinese whispers began through the grapevine, and battle-lines drawn as the rumours (through repetition) became accepted 'fact'. Some of these were reported in our news last issue, minus some of the more outrageous claims. "It ranged from the fact that we'd collapsed, that the entire 'empire' had collapsed...all of that swung round within a couple of days once we were back on the phones.

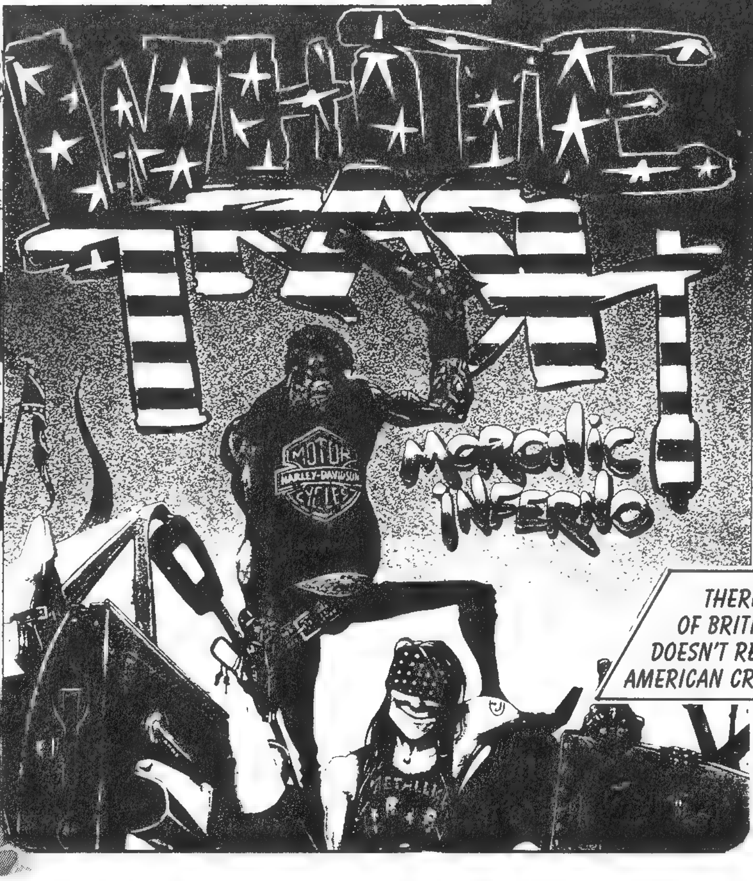
"Tundra simply needed to be rationalised. It was unfortunate that all this happened while we were moving. That was a disaster in the same way that all moves are a disaster because we ended up in the new place with workmen still finishing off, work packed in boxes...just the usual chaos.

"I suppose essentially it was the failure of communication, but we weren't really in a position where we could do anything about it. The rationalisation of Tundra had been coming for a long time. We knew that we would have to examine what we were doing much more closely than we had been.

"A lot of the projects we were doing and that were being done in the US were one-shot titles or two- or three-issue series that demand a huge amount of support in the market place. You're talking about soliciting titles to about 4,000 shops if you put the UK and US together. You're then talking about doing advertising and promotion for those titles not only for the three months when you're soliciting them, but much more importantly soliciting them for re-orders which is the only way that independent titles have ever survived. It means resoliciting them occasionally, doing more press material on them and trying to keep the trade press interested in them.

"If you've got an ongoing series it's much easier to maintain interest because you're not expecting to sell back-issues. Obviously there are back-issues sold to collectors, but the title is surviving on the month by month sales. Tundra was never going to be doing that: we need to be able to survive on re-orders, and that means we need to give the titles we do a much greater push to adequately support them in the market. There's not much point in Tundra UK putting out 55 titles in the next year if we're not in a position to support that and if we don't think that the market is there.

"Three or four months



NOMICS

ago people were accusing us of vanity publishing, but now that we've taken the long hard look that needed to be taken, people are saying 'How could you do this?'. The answer is, simply, there was no way we could *not* have done this! It would not have done creators any favours whatsoever. It's not because we're close to financial ruin. It's not because of any of those things.

"I suppose in the initial months of setting up – both here and in the States – there was a huge amount of optimism about what we could achieve. And really it would have been foolish to continue with the size of list we had, which would have meant that we would have been putting 15 to 20 titles into the market per month, many of them one-shots, and sustaining that when the independent market isn't growing, and is currently less than 10% of the entire share. It would have been near suicidal in two or three years time.

"The whole point of doing what we've done is so that we can continue publishing books for longer, and eventually be able to publish books by those creators whose projects we may not be able to do now."

A NEW FUTURE

Re-adjusting their marketing strategy called for more than a hard look at the list of titles they had: the problem of soliciting two lines (US and UK) each month had to be solved as well. A solution was to hand in the form of Atomeka Press, the imprint used by Dave Elliott and Garry Leach for the highly praised *A1* anthology. But to back-track slightly, what exactly were the problems?

"When Tundra UK were originally set up, Kevin wanted Dave and Helen to promote the books in the UK, liase with Europe and so forth, and there were a couple of projects that Dave wanted to do, amongst them *Skin*, which had been floating around. It was very obvious when Kevin came over and saw what Dave was interested in publishing that the projects had an identity that was seperate to what was being done in the US. But because there was no way we could solicit independently from the US as Tundra UK – all of our stock is bunched together – and because the titles were not terribly similar it wasn't helping either of us.

"Atomeka seems to be a logical name for an imprint, because Atomeka is a known quantity: *A1* did pretty well in the States, but then it was the first anthology to bring together Alan Moore, Neil Gaiman, John Bolton, Pete Milligan, Brendan McCarthy...all in the same anthology.

"So in part the change of name was to eliminate the confusion retailers and distributors were having – having to solicit information from two sources – and also because we feel that the imprint has an identity of its own. There is something about what a lot of British creators are doing that ties together in a way that doesn't really tie in with what even independent American creators are doing."

With the new imprint set to launch in September, there still remains the question of cancellations. Perhaps the rumour most rife – certainly the most damaging of the rumours – was that Tundra had slashed in one move all those titles that they felt were not immediately profitable. Not so, says Wynne:

"By and large, the books that we've already solicited are all going ahead. The problem was more that we were looking at operating wholly independently and doing our own solicitations over the next couple of years on what – at the time – was a tentative publishing schedule running to 50 or 55 titles. For a staff of 10 people that really just wasn't going to be humanly possible. Also, until some of our books actually get out there into book stores, it means we are surviving on the resources Kevin Eastman makes available to us; we have to invest those resources wisely, and in such a way that it will benefit as many creators as possible, and help those books sell and finance the books that will come behind them. Kevin doesn't have a bottomless pocket and we're not expecting him to finance us over and above a period of possibly a year, possibly 18 months. The whole point is to be solvent as soon as we possibly can.

THERE IS SOMETHING ABOUT WHAT A LOT OF BRITISH CREATORS ARE DOING . . . THAT DOESN'T REALLY TIE IN WITH WHAT EVEN INDEPENDENT AMERICAN CREATORS ARE DOING

"It does mean that the Atomeka imprint will lead off with things we believe are more commercial. It doesn't mean dropping all of the titles that we believe are *less* commercial. We're still doing something in the order of 30 or 35 titles in the first year of publication which are all independent titles – a damn sight more than any other publisher in this country is doing. More than most independent publishers in the States are doing.

"To say that we've in some way pulled the rug from beneath the creators...that's only because we were the only rug that was there. And, yes, I do think we were over-optimistic. In a way, it's unfortunate it's had to happen the way it happened. We should have been more realistic going into it, and said 'This is what we can realistically achieve in a year'.

"In total only nine titles have gone from the fifty we were doing. From the titles which remain, *Skidmarks* goes ahead, *Greenhouse Warriors* goes ahead to a certain point. There's a chance that *Greenhouse Warriors* will be cancelled as a six issue series and we may look at the idea of bringing it out as a trade paperback, quite simply because initial orders have been very low on UK titles: not enough information has been out there about them, and because these creators are unknown quantities in the US in particular, ordering levels are fairly low. But we should be able to work within the constraints of the market, and that will come to pass. *Skin* is obviously happening, *The Bogie Man* is happening as planned, *White Trash* will come out in September and will be the first comic as Atomeka, *Lazerus Churchyard* is going ahead as are other Atomeka titles: *Monster Massacre* is an anthology which will allow us to present a lot of the creators who are doing work for us. Basically its a high body count, very tongue-in-cheek, ludicrously silly sex-and-violence-and-steroids anthology. It's terribly tongue-in-cheek, but there is a fondness for doing that amongst creators, and in the market, and it will get a lot of our creators known to a wider audience."

Expect more titles to be confirmed by the new slim-line Tundra soon. CW

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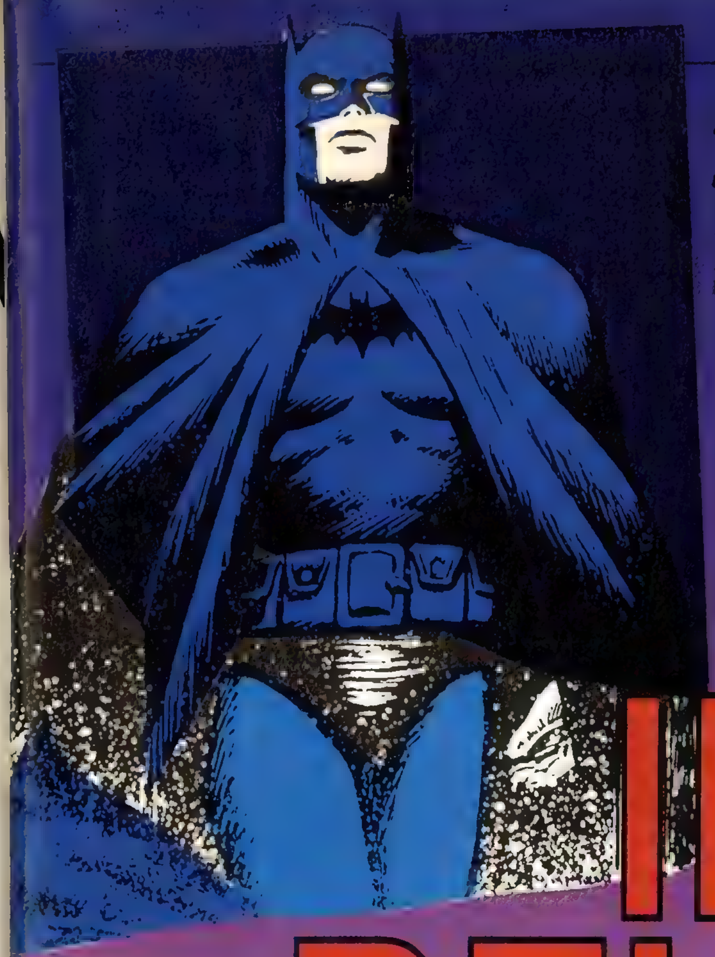


PAUL H. BIRCH TALKS TO BRYAN TALBOT, ARTIST FOR THE FORTHCOMING 'MASK' IN ***LEGENDS OF THE DARK KNIGHT*** AND THIS MONTH'S COVER

BATS IN THE BELFRY

"No mask line open truth to cover lies, As to go naked is the best disguise," these words by William Congreve appear to convey some of the ideas flowing through 'Mask' a two-part story to run in issues 39 and 40 of DC Comics Legends of the Dark Knight.

"The basic concept behind it is that Batman doesn't exist". A blasphemous statement for the multitude of Batfreaks now once more flooding comic stores the world over in light of the Batman Returns film's success? It's all down to a matter of perception and should in no terms spoil the sense of enjoyment rendered by British writer and artist, Bryan Talbot as you're about to learn. Such amusements actually start with how the creator got the go-ahead for this assignment.

"Batman was the first American comic I started reading when I was about eight. I've not had any burning desire to do the Batman, at least in the last ten years, and this story occurred almost by accident, I just happened to have the idea while I was lying in the bath." This receptacle seems to be an important ingredient to the Talbot creative mix, long soaks were known to be the order of the day when he illustrated 'Sloth' for Knockabout's *Seven Deadly Sins*.

"Two weeks later at the Glasgow comic convention I was having dinner with a group of people and Archie Goodwin mentioned that he'd taken over as editor on Legends of the Dark Knight. And I said 'Oh I've an idea for a story'." Goodwin listened, and, despite Talbot thinking it might have been done in some way before, told him otherwise and to send in a proposal. "I didn't! I thought he was being polite and asking me to do a proposal was just his way of getting rid of me!" he laughs. "About six months later at UKCAC in London I saw Archie again and the first thing he said to me was: 'Where's that Batman proposal you were going to do for me?' The week after I sat at my wordprocessor and banged out a one issue proposal, then he phoned back saying 'It's a great idea, spread it over two issues!'." All the way down the line, from synopses to scripts, then art Goodwin has exercised little in the way of hands-on editing that most creators have sleepless nights over. That's praise to Goodwin in picking the right talent, and Talbot for being within that number.

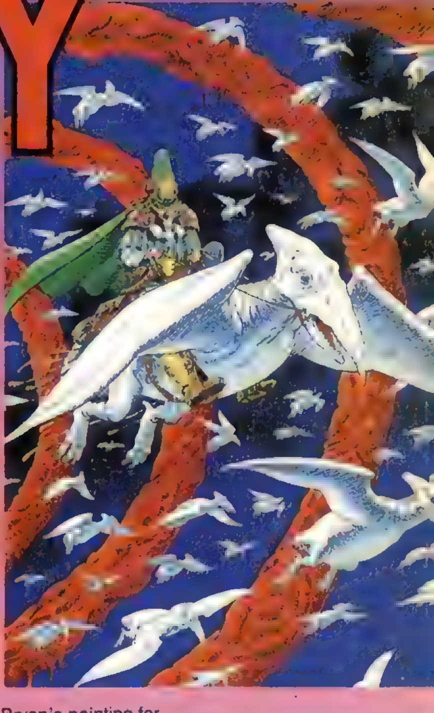
"Obviously he went through the script and pointed out the odd anglicism I'd put in by mistake," says Bryan. "But he didn't change the actual story at all."

So what's actually in store when we open the pages?

"The story starts with Batman on the roof-tops, I wanted to begin with that classic Batman on patrol scene, then what I've done is try to pull the rug from under the reader's feet at the end of this sequence – the next scene finds Bruce Wayne waking up in a hospital, and we see him going through the DT's!

"Bruce Wayne is an alcoholic bum who escapes his mundane reality of grime and poverty by having these vivid delusions about being a millionaire by day, and a costumed vigilante by night. That's the underlying concept behind it.

"He goes through analysis in the course of which we find out how these neuroses are explained. I always research things to a large extent, and I was very fortunate in that I have a friend who's a psychiatric nurse, I've actually



Bryan's painting for Legends of Arzach.

got him placed in the comic's credit box as 'Psychiatric Consultant: Keith Marsland'." In fact Marsland's finding himself pumped for information from all sides: their mutual friend, Stephen Gallagher's latest novel, *Nightmare, with Angel* bears a similar credit.

From the Harvey Award nominated Sandman Annual

Orpheus. You should wake soon. It is, after all, your wedding day.

DECONSTRUCTION

"I was trying to deconstruct Batman basically," Talbot gives as his *raison d'être*, "I know it's a trendy buzzword that everyone's using now, but the actual word deconstruction comes from literary criticism terms meaning: to take apart, to question in order to undermine the basic priciples.

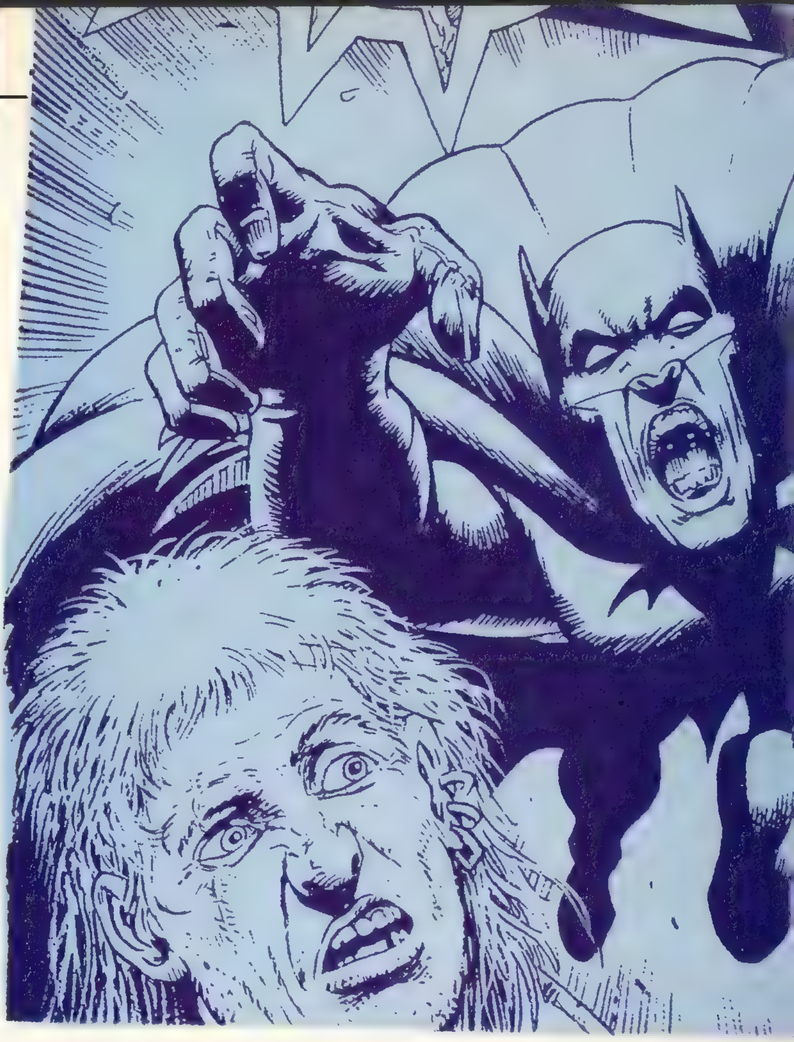
"I tried to pick out all the bits that you would think make up a Batman story but I tried to undermine the myth in a subversive way: to be a playboy by day, and a vigilante by night, is standard pulp detection fare, there's nothing new about it." It's how one approaches matters, and this idea corresponds with its first person narrative.

"As opposed to most Batman stories – or most superhero stories for that matter – it never cuts away to anybody else or any other theme."

Will the visuals affect the story?

"The first issue is very different from the second, a lot of comics are in two parts for no reason except that the pages have run out, so I had to try and make each part have a distinctive feel.

"For the first one, a lot of it's set in the hospital, but in the Batman and dream sequences I've used a very freestyle layout, with panels bleeding off the page, very dynamic action and lots of diagonals in the composition inked by heavy brush work. It puts in a visual dichotomy between that and the supposed reality of the situation where all the hospital scenes are on a nine-panel grid with quite light inks and no bleeds.



The second issue is a lot more linear. It's primarily a nightmare journey through Bruce Wayne's subsconscious idea of what Gotham would be like without the influence of Batman; it looks like a cross between Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* and *Beirut*; there are bombs going off, and mobs roaming the streets, everything has this weirdness about it." Bryan has spoken to Steve Oliff and envisages the colourist continuing these themes of visual farness, "I have faith in him."

What about villains?

"Loads! All the way through when he's dreaming or hallucinating – well it may be the reality, that's for the reader to decide – we briefly see the Joker in it, Penguin, Catwoman, Two-Face, and the mutants from *Dark Knight*, I managed to get them in even if they are from a possible future," he laughs.

"You can take the end of the story in two ways; he either is Batman or he isn't."

Bryan emphasises the bottom line for this two-part story is for it to still be an enjoyable bout of escapist-adventure, even if I do prefer the weird bits! But making his work accessible to readers is a lesson of recent years he believes is of benefit to his craft.

"In the early Arkwright material I did a lot of experimentation, and it's taken me a while to realise that absolute clarity in the storytelling is about the most sophisticated thing you can attempt: it's not being flashy and looking experimental, it's just telling a story with pictures in an *apparently* straightforward way.

"There's still experimentation going on but I'm hoping the reader won't pick up on the different aspects, and they'll be able to look back on it as a continuous flow, like a movie or a well-written novel."

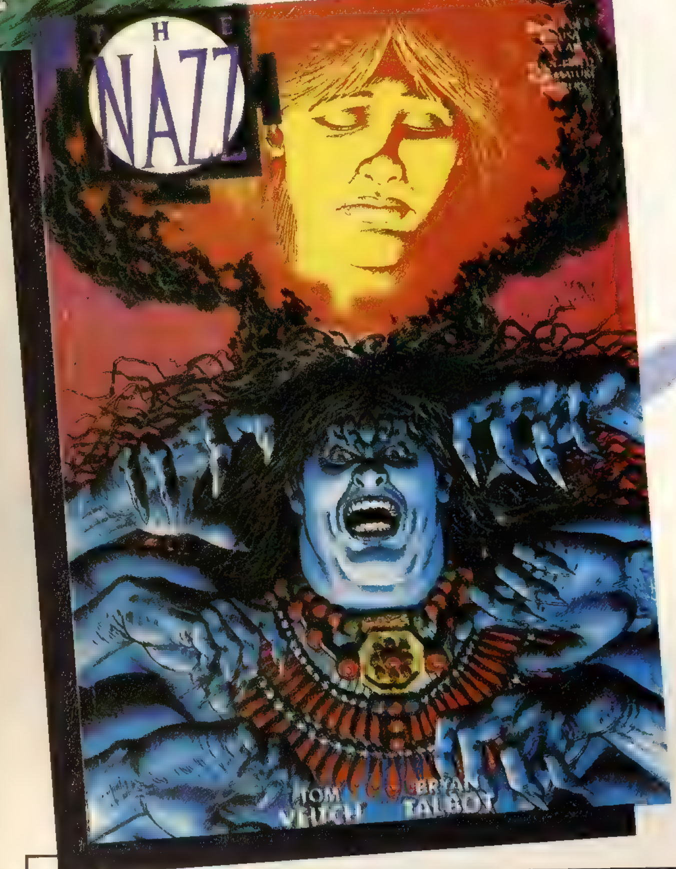
The superhero genre isn't necessarily one you'd expect Talbot to be interested in.

"Batman's different – he's the dark one! There's a lot of similar superheroes sprang up since but he's the original, and he's got a lot more about him than the boy scout types."

Of course, *The Nazz* played with the superhuman theme, it had been developed from work Tom Veitch had ventured into with his 'beat novels' of the '70s.

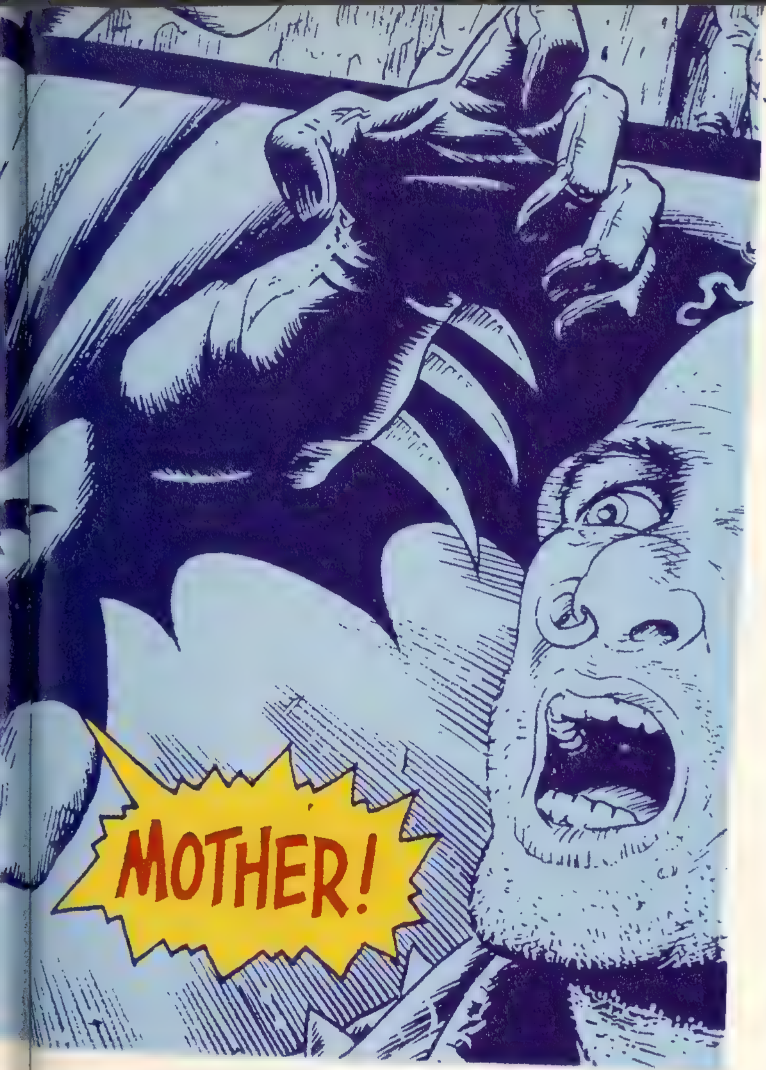
"If you look at the finished story compared to the synopsis it's very different so I had a lot of input, but at the same time it was carrying on themes I'd explored with Arkwright. I'm still pleased with it and I think I did a good job with the artwork.

"With *The Nazz* I established a six-panel grid to indicate normality, but as things got weirder I'd start breaking out and it might disappear altogether, and that fourth issue is really where I started getting into it." This was the beginning of his discovery of sophistication through clarify. "But at the same time the reader's perception of the story would be manipulated all the way through."



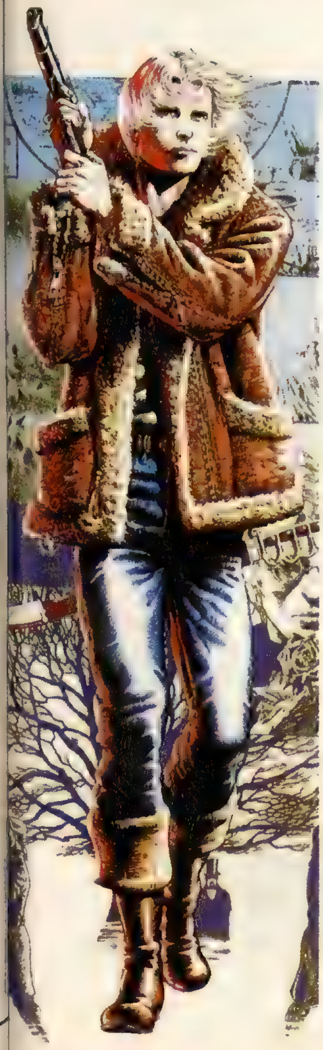
ARKWRIGHT

Those new to Bryan's work, or oblivious to his earliest published material in British underground comix such as *Brainstorm*, may be a little confused by this constant talk of something called *The Adventures of Luther Arkwright*. Published in a variety of comics and three book collections, many call *Arkwright* his magnum opus, a rather



▲ Above: Batman, from the forthcoming Mask.

Below: Luther Arkwright, from the cover of the Role Playing Game.



premature comment since Talbot's far from ready to retire. Arguably the first British graphic novel, it's won a stack of Eagle Awards, had its own fanzine, and maintains a cult following that would rip your head off should you dare to describe its storyline in less than 5000 words, but here goes: It concerns the fate of – you've guessed it – Luther Arkwright, the only individual without a doppelganger throughout various parallel worlds whose alternative histories are being manipulated. It's quite remarkable in its structure; and for such detail given to the English civil war period, actually rather European in flavour, and that's at last where it's to find a home.

"Telemaco are flying me out to Lucca, the Italian convention in Tuscany. They do books and a few comics, and they're starting a new one called Europa." An anthology of European reprint work, Arkwright debuts in its first issue.

"It's marvellous because I've not really been published in Europe before apart from the *Hellblazer Annual* which recently came out in Spain.

In previous years publishers have expressed interest in Arkwright collections on the continent, but "with the exception of Meobius, black and white doesn't sell well," but it appears America may provide the solution. "I'm hoping this Dark Horse edition, putting all the books in one volume in colour is going to come out next year." With Talbot supplying guides, the colouring will be created on computer system, an increasingly popular method.

Arkwright's adventures will continue, as such, but not for a while.

"I'm slowly working on a sequel but I'd like it to be very different and stand on its own, I don't just want to do the same thing again. It'll mainly be about Arkwright's daughter."

Yet fans whose minds blur with the constant conundrums that could occur for the character are now able to put their own ideas to the test as 23rd Parallel Games have at least released *The Luther Arkwright Role-playing Game.* A hefty-sized rule book is out along with a scenario bagged for good measure. Scenarios will be produced on a regular basis with all-new covers by Talbot.

Talbot is also illustrating covers for *Raggedy Man*, a cyberpunk comic that debuted from Brave New Worlds six months back.

"Apparently they're folding and it's moved to a new independent publisher. This will be its first title." The new publisher is Cult Comics.

"They'll be reprinting the first one I did the cover for which will be the prologue to the story, and after that it begins the main story. It's written by T. M. Lowe with art by Anthony J. Hicks – and I'm not kidding you the artwork keeps getting better each issue!"

In recent years, Talbot's had a number of his older works collected such as *Frank Fazakerly, Space Ace of the Future* published last year, as we talk he toys with the idea of returning to it. "It occurs to me redrawn with colour, and reworked slightly in an Asterix type album it might reach a wide European audience." But I wondered if we'd ever see the conclusion to 'Scumworld' which ran in *Sounds*? "I hope not!" he laughs. "It was terrible, the brief I had was to do something as close to underground comix without them getting sued." It was due to move over to *Kerrang!* but never did. "I did four episodes that they'd asked for, they never printed them, I never got paid for them and they lost some original art. You can put this in print, Geoff Barton said it was a bit too near the knuckle for *Kerrang!*"

BAD RAT

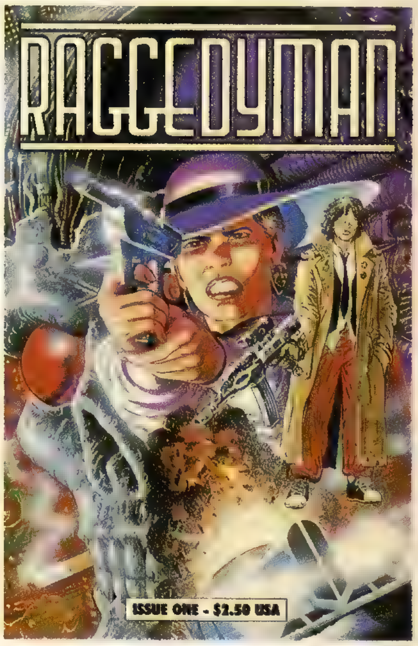
Readers will have to wait around a year for Bryan's next major project, *The Tale of One Bad Rat* which will be published by Dark Horse.

"They're talking about putting it out in three comics, and then as a graphic novel. I'll be doing the colouring for it on blue line. At the moment I want to do it like *Hardboiled* in a large format, I don't think it'd suit a small comic size."

The Talbots have a pet rat but he says the tale's not based on it, although "I've used the rat as a model." I picture it sitting calmly giving its best left profile.

The mind boggles at how the resultant comics will look and read when he mentions his research thus far.

"I've read three books on rats already, twelve books on child abuse, about ten on Beatrix Potter, and I've a pile of books on the Lake District which I'm wading through at the moment." Bringing in seemingly diverse elements and transforming them into a cohesive whole has always been one of Talbot's

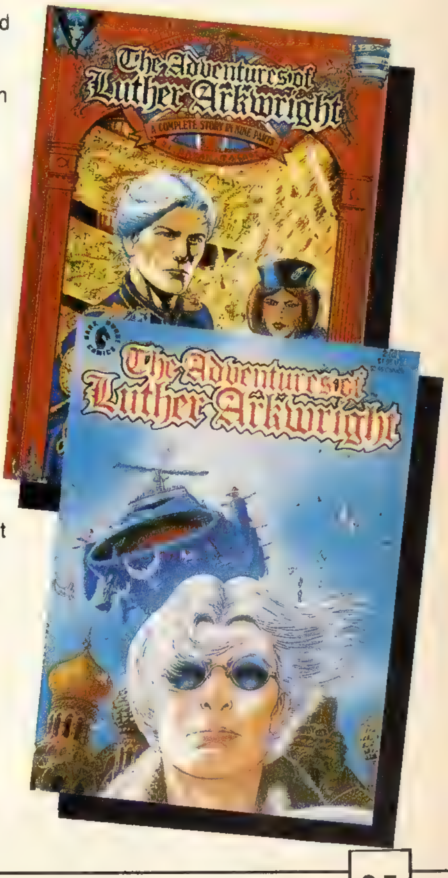


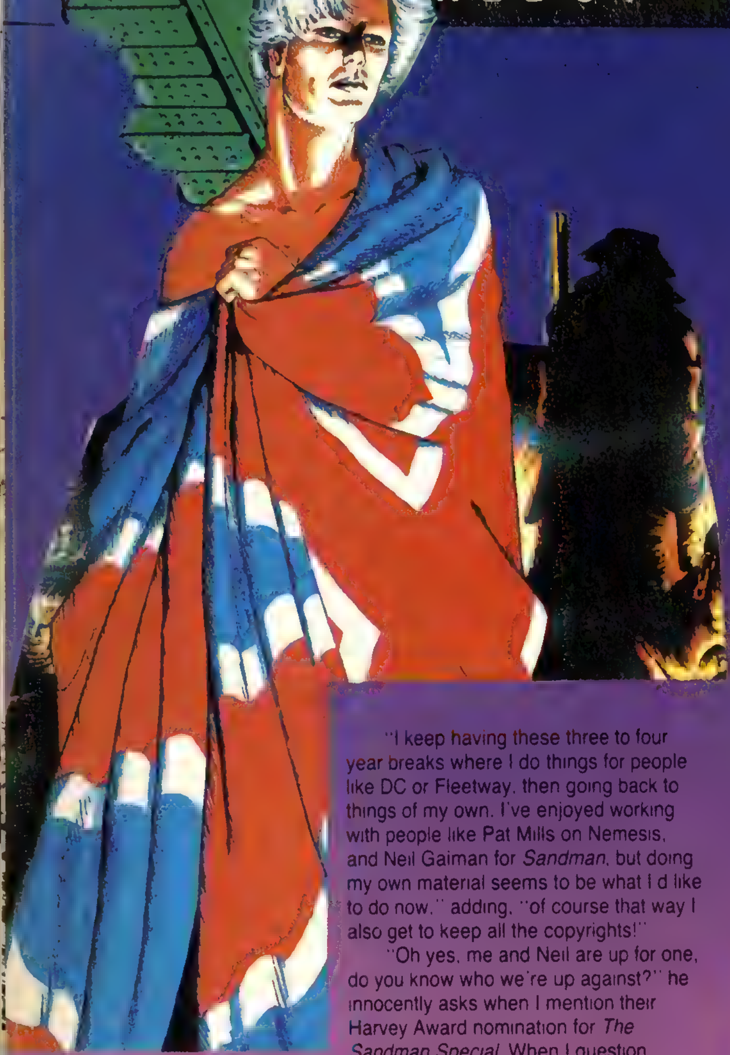
trademarks.

"It's not aimed at comic readers really," he says of *The Tale of One Bad Rat.* "It's aimed at the general book market."

But for this, as with *Legends of the Dark Knight* he's prepared scripts, presumably an additional chore in the work chain for an all-round comics creator?

"With the Batman story I sent the complete script in first and found I quite enjoyed doing it. But when I script things I don't just work on the language, I work very closely with the visuals in that at the same time I'm working on the layouts. Inversely, when I'm working on the drawings I'm thinking about what they're saying. I think that's the best way to do it, working on them both at the same time.


The Adventures of Luther Arkwright
A COMPLETE STORY IN NINE PARTS
The Adventures of Luther Arkwright



"I keep having these three to four year breaks where I do things for people like DC or Fleetway, then going back to things of my own. I've enjoyed working with people like Pat Mills on Nemesis, and Neil Gaiman for *Sandman*, but doing my own material seems to be what I d like to do now," adding, "of course that way I also get to keep all the copyrights!"

"Oh yes, me and Neil are up for one, do you know who we're up against?" he innocently asks when I mention their Harvey Award nomination for *The Sandman Special*. When I question whether there are still people he's interested in collaborating with he talks about some bloke called Moore

"I liked working with Alan on several short stories years ago, Ro-Busters and such like." And were you foolish enough not to purchase the Ethiopian Benefit comic, *Food for Thought* some years back where 'Cold Snap' by the pair appeared, it's originally intended home, *Slow Death* may yet surface from Last Gasp.

"I see Ron Turner every few years and he's always saying 'I'm going to do it!' He's got it all together and it's going to be amazing when it comes out. He's been working on it for twelve years and it's got unpublished work in there by all the big names in underground comix." Both the late Greg Irons and Wally Wood are amongst that number.

Bryan contributed a picture to the second issue of *The Omaha Benefit Book*, of which the proceeds will go to Reed Waller's medical fund, unfortunately the artist says "I don't think Customs are letting them in."

If this is to be a rarity on these shores, there are other pieces of art in existence that even fewer collectors will see. When Adam Ant hit the big time, Bryan was called upon to do illustrations of the pop star for numerous magazines. He no longer does advertising work but such art is in existence, for example two pictures promoting lager.

"It was an air-brushed picture of a pub on the front of a leaflet with printed maps in the background, then you opened it up and there was a pub exploding with this huge pint of Heineken coming out of the roof." This writer will shortly be exploring his father's fine tavern's store rooms, and if copies of those leaflets are discovered expect an advert in this magazine soon demanding extortionate prices for such!

"You know I'm officially a famous comic book creator now." Pardon? No it's not some persecuted ego at last being given free reign here

"It's a set of trading cards that have come out from Eclipse: *Famous Comic Book Creators* – I'm one of 'em! There's a hundred and ten in the series. I'd forgotten all about it, they approached me about two years ago to send a photograph and some biographical information. I got this package a couple of weeks back and wondered what it was." There's also an album available to keep the cards in.

Did he think of himself as within the world-class ranking the cards suggested?

"I think I'm in the first division of British creators now, but as for the world?" He acknowledges the sales of *The Sandman Special* has helped his name become more known in the USA, but it's not unexpected when he says, "I'd like to be more well known in Europe". The world of Bande Dessine has always been close to his heart, he created a plate for issue one of *Legends of Arzach* a continuation of Moebius' far-famed character using illustrations and a storyline by the Lofficiers published by Tundra

Bryan's long championed comics for an adult audience he toured with a slide show demonstrating its history around a decade back.

"I did it at Kingston University, and the thing it ended on was 'And the future is graphic novels!' I found out years later that Dave McKean was in the audience . . . so maybe it influenced him a bit!"

Has Bryan's own attitude to the type of work he wants to produce changed over the years?

"I've always wanted to produce as wide a range of work as possible. The *Bad Rat* book will be very different from anything else I ve ever done, it's non-generic, totally mainstream but after that I want to do the *Luther Arkwright* book which will be SF and quite European." His mind is afloat with ideas "Anything from humour to horror, to working for DC again. I'm not anti-superheroes: *Watchmen* and *Dark Knight* showed that you can do a good superhero story that's worth any intelligent person's time to sit down and read. As long as it's got a sense of integrity and quality I'd like to do it." And you, dear readers, are the ones who should benefit from such commitment to the comic medium. **CW**

I THINK I'M IN THE FIRST DIVISION OF BRITISH CREATORS NOW, BUT AS FOR THE WORLD?

Bryan Talbot
the trading card.

Batman © DC Comics
Luther Arkwright © Bryan Talbot
Raggedy Man © T. M. Lowe
& Anthony Hicks
Arzach © Starwatcher Graphics

BRYAN TALBOT STRIPOGRAPHY

Superharris (with Bonk, in *Hac*, 1971-1972)
Chester P. Hackenbush, the Psychedelic Alchemist (by BT)
  Out of the Crucible (in *Brainstorm Comix 1*, Nov 1975)
  From Here to Infinity (in *Brainstorm Comix 2*, Jul 1976)
  A Streetcar Named Delirium (in *Brainstorm Comix 4*, Feb 1977)
The Influence of Hassan-I-Sabbah (in *Seed v5/5*, Jul 1976, by BT)
The Papist Affair (in *The Mixed Bunch 1*, Nov 1976, by BT: early Luther Arkwright)
Komix Comics (in *Streetcomix 3*, May 1977, by BT)
The World Heavyweight Roboxing Championship (with Bonk, *Brainstorm Fantasy Comix 1*, Sum 1977)
Committed (in *Kak Comics 2*, Jul 1977)
Komicsscimok (in *Kak Comics 2*, Jul 1977)
Interlude (in *Home Grown 1*, Aut 1977, by BT)
The Omega Report (in *Amazing Rock'n'Roll Adventures*, 1978, by BT)
Luther Arkwright (by BT)
  (in *Near Myths 1-5*, Sep 1978-Apr 1980)
  (in *Pssst! 2-10*, Feb-Oct 1982; reprints *Near Myths* plus new material)
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  Luther Arkwright: The Fire Opal of Set (in *Imagine 14*, May 1984)
  (in *The Adventures of Luther Arkwright 1-9*, Oct 1987-Feb 1989: reprints *Near Myths* and *Pssst* plus new material; reprinted as *Luther Arkwright 1-9*, Mar 1990-Jan 1991)
Frank Fazakerly, Space Ace of the Future (in *Ad Astra 1-17*, Oct 1978-Sep 1981, by BT)
Ghost Train (in *Comics Plus 5*, 1979)
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Spaced Out in Amsterdam (in *Home Grown 7*, Sum 1980)
Arnold Gets Cross (in *Knockabout 2*, 1980, by BT & Rick Jakimowicz)
The Wages of Sin (in *2000AD 257*, 27 Mar 1982, by Alan Moore)
Ro-Busters Old Red Eyes is Back (in *2000AD Annual 1983*, by Alan Moore)
Scumworld (in *Sounds*, Jul 1983-Apr 1984, by The Crabs from Uranus)
Nemesis (by Pat Mills).
  The Gothic Empire (in *2000AD 389-406*, 27 Oct 1984-23 Feb 1985)
  The Vengeance of Thoth (in *2000AD 435-445*, 14 Sep-23 Nov 1985)
  Torquemurder (in *2000AD 482-487,500-504*, 9 Aug-13 Sep 1986, 13 Dec 1986-10 Jan 1987)
  Torquemada: The Garden of Alien Delights (in *Diceman 3*, Jun 1986)
Cold Snap (in *Food for Thought*, Apr 1985, by Alan Moore)
Slaine (in *2000AD 431*, Aug 1985, by Pat Mills. Pencils by Glenn Fabry)
Nightjar (in *Arkensword 15*, 1985, by Alan Moore. 1 page of unpublished story)
Judge Dredd
  You Are Judge Dredd: House of Death (in *Diceman 1*, Jan 1986, by Pat Mills)
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  Judge Dredd & the 7 Dwarves (in *Judge Dredd Annual 1987*, by Alan Grant & John Wagner)
  Ladies Night (in *2000AD Annual 1987*, by Alan Grant & John Wagner)
  (untitled) (in *Info*, 1992. 1pg information strip)
Enemy Alien (with Mike Matthews, in *2000AD Sci-Fi Special*, 1986, by Mike Matthews)
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From Homogenous to Honey (in *AARGH!*, Oct 1988, by Neil Gaiman. Inks by Mark Buckingham)
Sloth (in *Seven Deadly Sins*, May 1989, by Neil Gaiman)
John Constantine: The Bloody Saint (in *Hellblazer Annual 1*, Oct 1989, by Jamie Delano)
The Nazz (in *The Nazz 1-4*, Oct 1990-Apr 1991, by Tom Veitch)
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Sandman (by Neil Gaiman)
  The Song of Orpheus (in *Sandman Special 1*, 1991 Inks by Mark Buckingham)
  August (in *Sandman 30*, Sep 1991. Inks by Stan Woch)
  A Game of You: Over the Sea to Sky (in *Sandman 36*, Apr 1992. Inks by Stan Woch. Part only)
Shade the Changing Man: The Santa Fe Trail (in *Shade the Changing Man 14*, Aug 1991, by Peter Milligan. Inks by Mark Pennington)
Brainworm (in *Xpresso Special 2*, Dec 1991, by Matthias Schultheiss)

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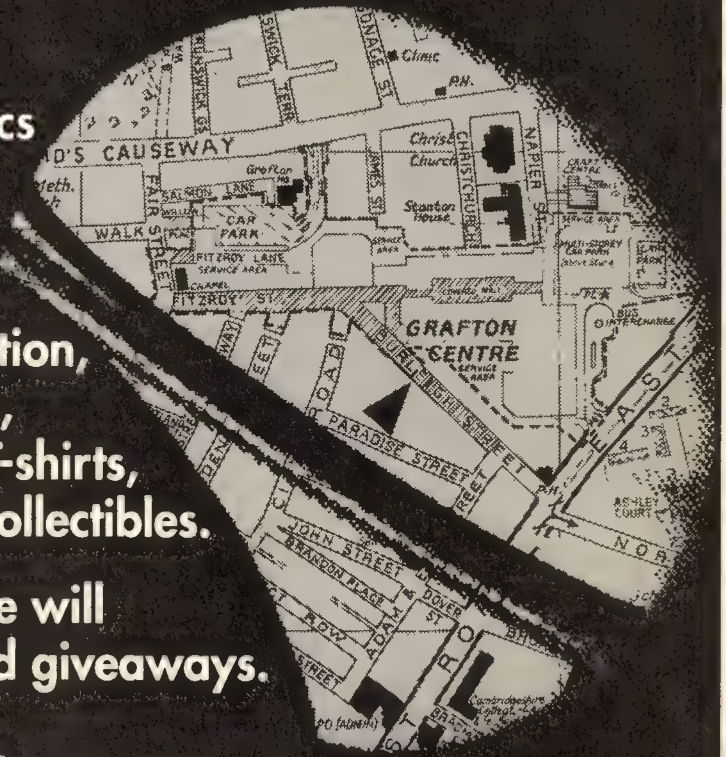
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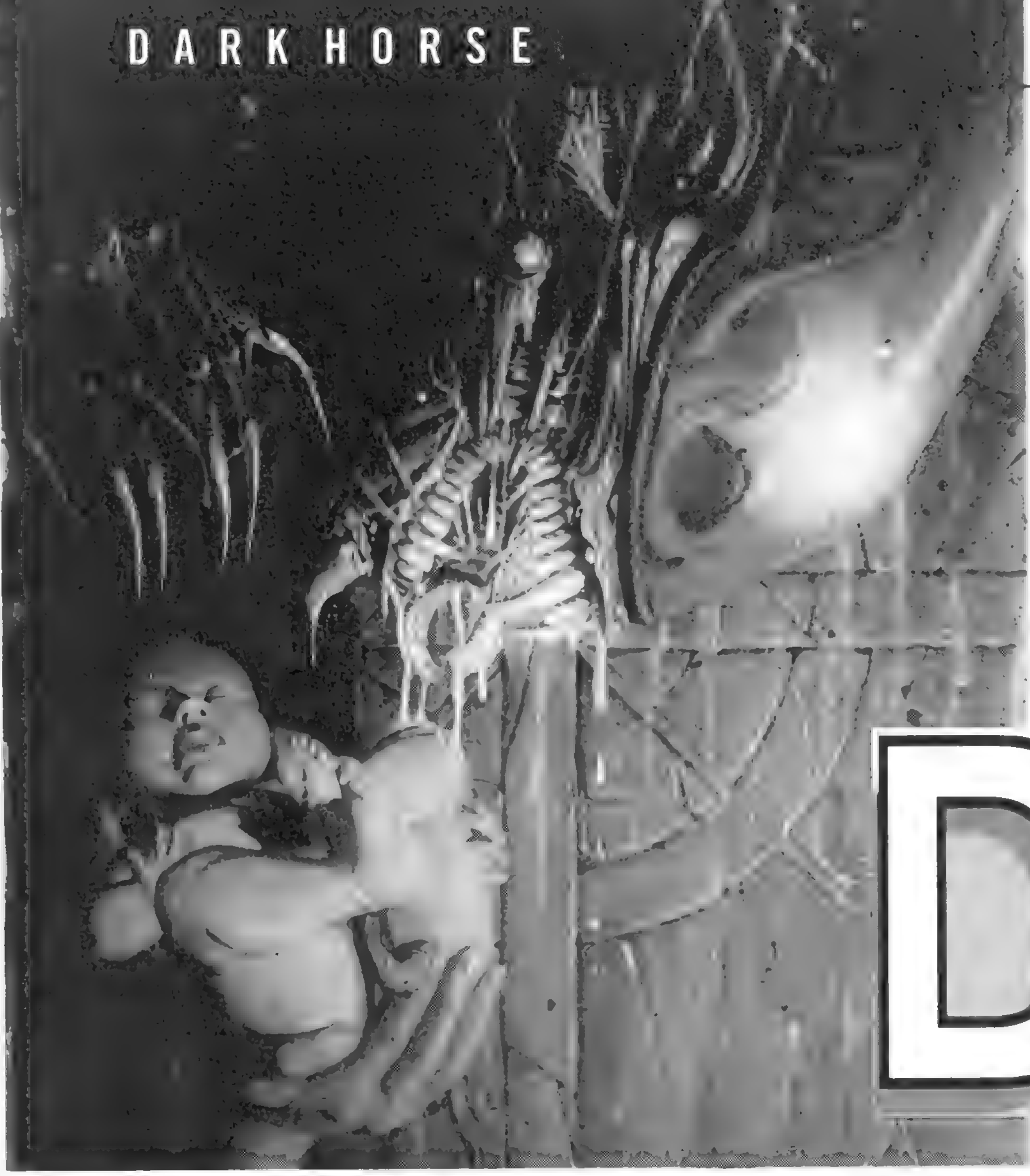


Aliens: Sacrifice art by Paul Johnson.

DAR

It's a hard life being an independent American comic company: the attrition rate is high among the small fry, as Comico and Pacific Comics (to name but two) will attest. So when even the mighty Disney organisation has to cut its losses, what chance have the others got up against the big two, Marvel and DC? One company, however, that has been successfully disproving this sceptic's scenario for the past six years is Dark Horse.

Dark Horse Comics was founded in 1986 by Mike Richardson and Randy Stradley to provide an alternative outlet for comic writers and artists frustrated by Marvel and DC's super-hero fixation and antagonistic attitude towards creators' rights. As Richardson, a former artist and comic shop owner, puts it, "Dark Horse was founded as a creators' company: we want to give as many creators as possible as much control as we can over their projects. We are trying to give access to a much larger group of comic creators to the comic book marketplace than has been seen in twenty years, by expanding the types of product available. Dark Horse will never be a company that just does more of the same."

"... BUT IF YOU CAN ADAPT TODAY'S HIT FILMS WHY NOT DO YESTERDAY'S AND TOMORROW'S?"

Both as company ethos and marketing strategy, diversification has paid off handsomely: last year Dark Horse was the number three US comic company in terms of sales, with a close on 10% market share (the highest third placement ever recorded for an American comic company) and a current line-up of 25 titles per month. In fact, the creator-owned properties, covering such disparate genres as westerns, romance and humour, dominate Dark Horse's listings, with the publicity-grabbing licensed titles numbering only some 15% of their total line-up at the last count. Their latest such film-based fare includes *Aliens: Tribes, James Bond: Serpent's Tooth, Predator vs Magnus Robot Fighter, RoboCop: Prime Suspect, RoboCop vs The Terminator, Star Wars: Dark Empire, Classic Star Wars* and *Terminator: Endgame.*

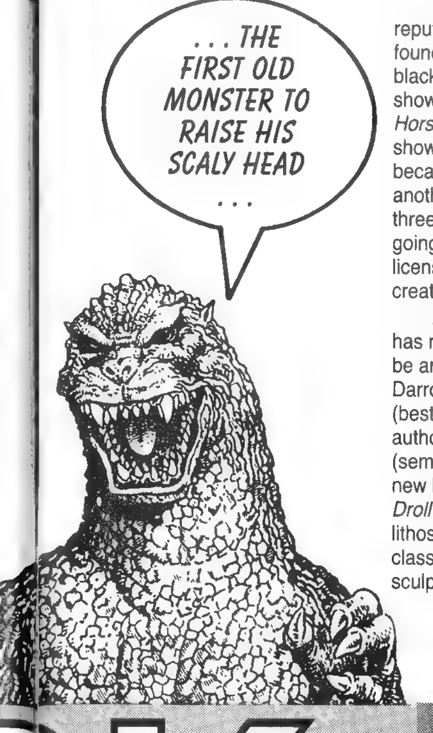
But if you can adapt today's hit films, why not do yesterday's and tomorrow's, along with all the comics-only sequels and prequels? Dark Horse as usual have been there, seen it, and are doing it: "We've signed to do a series of movie adaptations based on Universal's old monster movies – we are going to do *Frankenstein, The Wolfman* and *Dracula* in 48-page, perfect bound, de luxe versions of each movie. We will deal very much in the spirit of the old Universal movies and we will continue on after we've run out of the original movies, so there will appear movies *you didn't see* as though they were sequels." The first old monster to raise his scaly head is Godzilla in the *Godzilla Color Special* by Randy Stradley and Art Adams.

Back to the future: how do you persuade film companies, notoriously chary of revealing scripts to outsiders, to let you do a comics adaptation of your as yet unmade surprise blockbuster hit for next year? Simple: write the script yourself or get the director to write it for you. "Dark Horse has set up a deal with Largo (Larry Gordon's film company), whereby we bring projects into Largo for development as motion pictures. Because of that involvement, we have the opportunity to be right in at the beginning, generating new stories and ideas that will then be turned into movies."

Among the current candidates for such double exposure on page and screen are *Concrete*, which is being written by Larry Wilson and Karen Thompson, who did the *Addams Family* film; *Time Cop*, an original character that Dark Horse owns, which is being done by Sam Raimi; and *The Mask*, another Dark Horse character. The first such joint project, though, is *Dr Giggles*: "*Dr Giggles* is the first Dark Horse Entertainment film, for release this Halloween through Universal. We are creating in *Dark Horse Presents* the backstory for that movie and Manny Coto, the writer/director, will be adapting the movie itself in two issues this October." Another such director-turned-comic-writer is Sam Raimi, adapting his own *Evil Dead* and *Army of Darkness.*

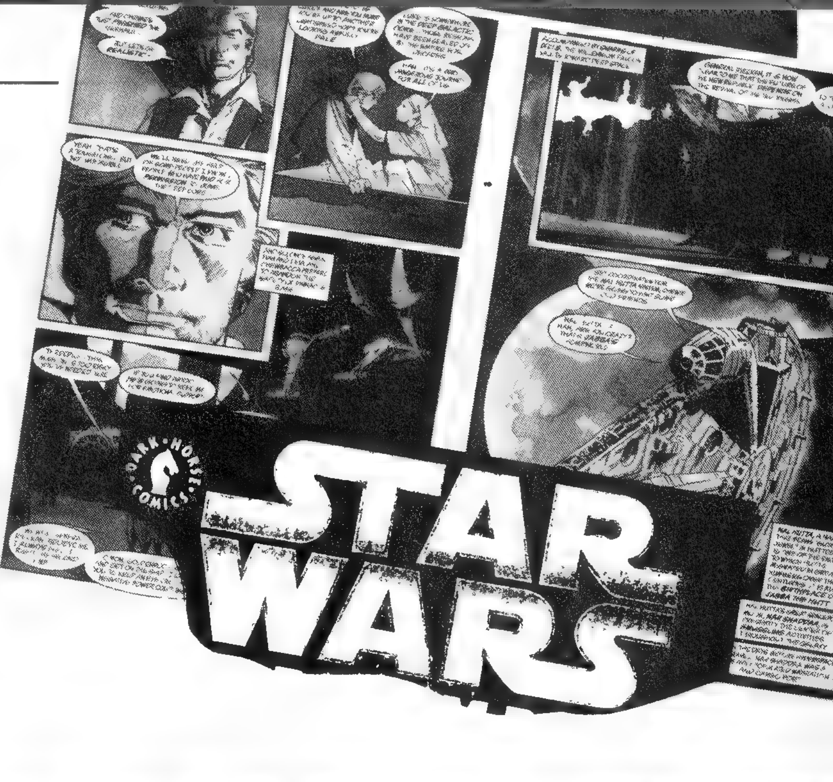
Yet if Dark Horse's finances have been secured through licensing and adapting film fiction, along with the customary merchandising memorabilia (new this year: trading cards), their

Art © Dark Horse
Star Wars © Lucasfilm Ltd
Aliens © 20th Century Fox Film Corporation


. . . THE FIRST OLD MONSTER TO RAISE HIS SCALY HEAD . . .

reputation for innovation is equally well-founded: their very first publication, the black and white *Dark Horse Presents*, showcased the company's intent. "*Dark Horse Presents* was originally meant to show a lot of new talent, who then became big names. Now we're starting another book [*Dark Horse Comics*] with three or four colour strips, where we're going to put newcomers on some of the licensed material and use big name creators to launch new characters."

As to those big names, Dark Horse has new creator-owned projects soon to be announced by Frank Miller and Geoff Darrow, Dave Gibbons, Andrew Vachs (best-selling American crime fiction author) and the great Don Martin (seminal *Mad* artist): "We have his first new book in some time [*Don Martin's Droll Book*], as well as two limited edition lithos, some prepainted figurines of his classic characters, and a series of sculptures. . . ."



RK HORSE

DARK HORSE INTERNATIONAL ARE THE LATEST AMERICAN COMPANY TO SET UP A BASE IN THE UK. ALAN WOOLLCOMBE PAYS A VISIT TO FIND OUT WHAT THEY HAVE IN STORE . . .

Sculptures?! Well, yes, and not just kits of the Airfix and glue variety, either: "We've hired Randy Bowen, who did the Batman figure for DC and is the premier American toy sculptor, for our toy division and we have whole lines of models coming out, both mass market and limited edition."

Paradoxically, the one *genre* where the company has not had a presence to date is the traditional super-hero comic: "One of the problems is that in the past companies that have gone up against Marvel and DC and done super-heroes have got their brains beat out, although in recent months Valiant and Image have proven it can be done. We've tried to build a solid line by going into areas that don't compete with other companies' products. Now that we've done so, I believe we will have super-heroes sharing a universe in one section of our line."

With this vast spread of titles, however, Richardson is clear eyed about the risks inherent in pushing innovation in a conservative climate: "The biggest temptation we have right now is to expand too fast, because some of these projects and directions take on a life of their own and keeping control is difficult. But we've been very successful at doing it so far, and we plan to continue growing and moving into a lot of new areas." One such area was the UK.

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THE BRITISH EMPIRE

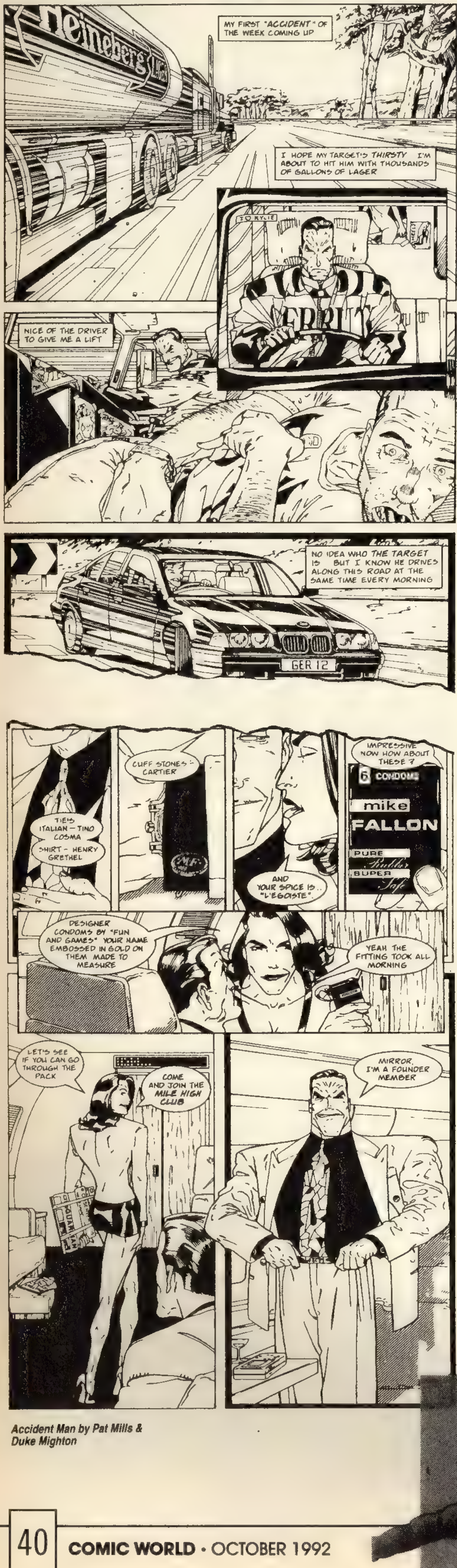
Seeing possibilities of expansion beyond the home market, Dark Horse also wanted greater control over its material and access to its creators: "Different agents controlled the work in different parts of the world and the creators weren't getting royalties. The only way to prevent that is to control publishing in as many areas of the world as we can, by becoming an international publishing company. The UK seemed the best place to start as our books have always done very well here."

To head the new enterprise, dubbed Dark Horse International, Richardson recruited someone not in the usual mold of company bosses, Liliana Bolton, wife of top artist John Bolton. "When we were looking for people to set up the operation over here, Liliana was my first choice for running it. She knows comics, she is very well-connected in the industry, and she is a very smart lady. Aside from her talents, she is universally liked and trusted enough to operate with the minimum of criticism."

For Liliana Bolton, after five years at Titan Distributors and a background in accountancy, the offer came as a challenge: "I was very excited when Mike offered me the job of setting up the London office, it was an opportunity that I couldn't really pass up. Through my accountancy background I have dealt with contracts for my husband, and through him acquired an appreciation of creators' needs; through Titan I learnt about the business from the distribution side – so I feel I have a fairly rounded grasp of the industry!"

To complete the team, former *Crisis* editor Michael Bennent was tapped for the position of editorial director. It was not a happy experience: "Michael and I were the co-founders of Dark Horse International, and it is unfortunate that our views of the way the company should develop didn't coincide. Michael felt the job wasn't working out for him and resigned to pursue a different course, but he and I remain friends."

Fortuitously for Dark Horse, however, there was someone else on the spot who fitted the bill: Dick Hansom, head of Acme Comics, with whom Dark Horse were already co-producing various *James Bond* mini-series. For Richardson, it was too good an opportunity to miss: "I've known Dick for some time: he knows the business over here, I respect his judgment and he's a person I can count on to get things rolling. He does what he says he is going to do, and he seemed like a very good person to bring


MY FIRST "ACCIDENT" OF THE WEEK COMING UP
I HOPE MY TARGET'S THIRSTY I'M ABOUT TO HIT HIM WITH THOUSANDS OF GALLONS OF LAGER
I ♥ KYLIE
NICE OF THE DRIVER TO GIVE ME A LIFT
NO IDEA WHO THE TARGET IS BUT I KNOW HE DRIVES ALONG THIS ROAD AT THE SAME TIME EVERY MORNING
GER 12
CUFF STONES - CARTIER
IMPRESSIVE NOW HOW ABOUT THESE ?
6 CONDOMS
mike FALLON
PURE
SUPER Safe
TIE'S ITALIAN - TINO COSMA
SHIRT - HENRY GRETHEL
AND YOUR SPICE IS .. "L'EGOISTE"
DESIGNER CONDOMS BY "FUN AND GAMES" YOUR NAME EMBOSSED IN GOLD ON THEM MADE TO MEASURE
YEAH THE FITTING TOOK ALL MORNING
LET'S SEE IF YOU CAN GO THROUGH THE PACK
COME AND JOIN THE MILE HIGH CLUB
MIRROR, I'M A FOUNDER MEMBER

Accident Man by Pat Mills & Duke Mighton

into the company."

Liliana, too, is delighted at the way things eventually worked out: "I'm very pleased that Dick has joined our cause. He's an extremely good editor, very good with the creators, and works very hard. We get on very well and there's a lot of consultation between us. Did I say I enjoy working with him?" She did, several times.

THE NEW LINE

With the company up and running, the British arm's immediate aim has been to have three monthly titles in the newsagents within the first few months. In marked contrast to the parent company's extensive catalogue, however, Dark Horse International will initially be concentrating on the tried and trusted licensed film characters, with extra features to attract the non-comics-oriented wider public. First to employ this belt and braces approach has been the regular *Aliens* magazine, taken over from Trident Publishing and renumbered as from the second Dark Horse issue (the old storylines were wrapped up in their true 'first issue).

The second title, the *Alien^3* film adaptation, is a three part serialisation launched on the back of the film. According to Dick Hansom, it is the template for the kind of British newsstand publication Dark Horse have in mind for the future: "In addition to the American comicbook material, there is something for people who are into movie magazines as well. Each issue contains about sixteen pages of features and interviews – there's an interview with Sigourney Weaver, features on the making of *Alien^3* and on the merchandising and, interestingly enough, some of the material cut from the final version of the film. Again, it's part of our attempt to broaden our readership beyond just the comics market."

Dark Horse's other newsstand magazine, *Star Wars*, to be launched any day now, follows the same pattern of licensed characters (in this case Star Wars and Indiana Jones) in a mix of mainly American comic strips and British magazine features. However, Hansom promises new all-British stories are in the making: "We already have British creators working on matrerial: Paul Johnson and Peter Milligan are doing a series called *Aliens: Sacrifice*, and then Michael Cook (writer) and Christian Gournay (artist) are going to be doing a three-part Aliens series as well."

With the initial three titles up and running, Dark Horse International plans to showcase more big names from its hefty licensed stable, with *Predator*, *RoboCop* and *Terminator* in the immediate future and *James Bond* as a longer term possibility. (In an ironic footnote, having only just taken over publishing *Terminator* material in this country [from Trident], worldwide Dark Horse will shortly lose the rights to do any more *Terminator* stories to Marvel). Hansom reckons that by next spring the British line could also include a horror/monster book and a home for other movie adaptations that Dark Horse have done.

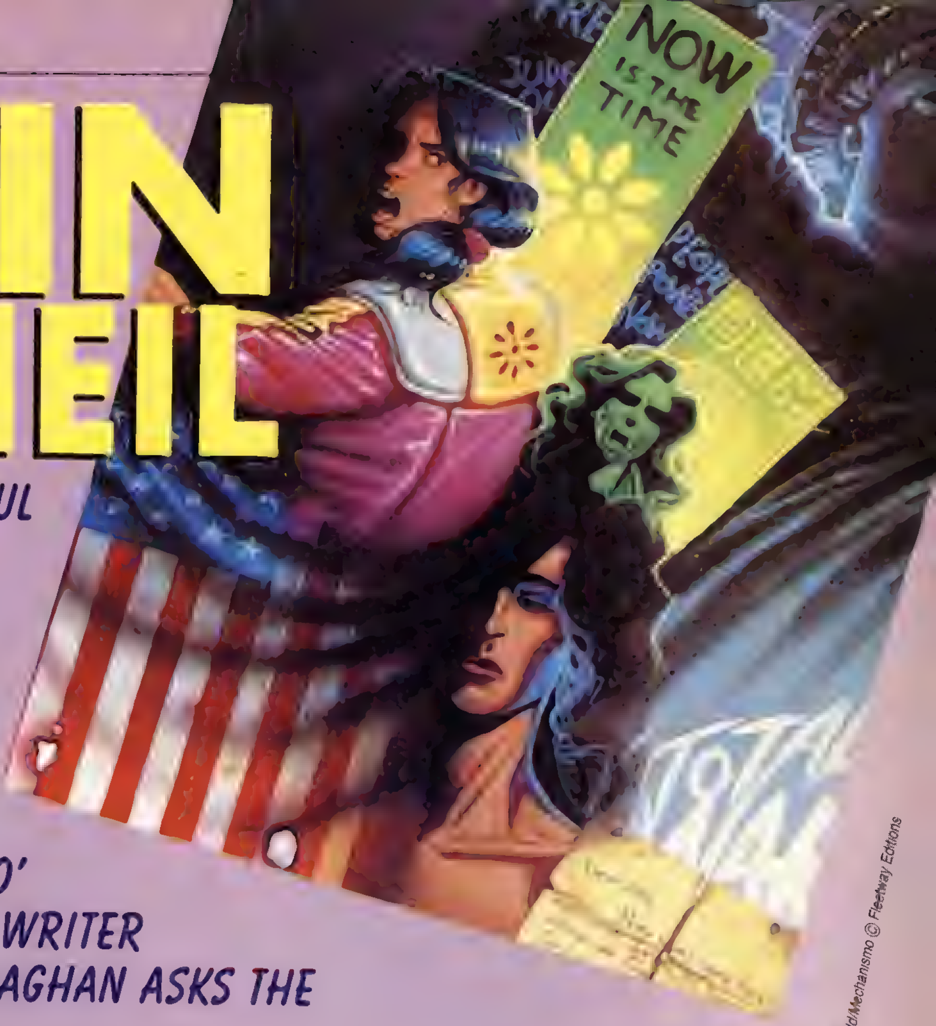
The formula seems to be working so far: sales figures on *Aliens* are around a healthy 50,000 copies a month, and Liliana Bolton predicts more for *Alien^3*. She credits a lot of the success to the magazines' design: "Titan Studios under Leigh Baulch have handled all the production work and layouts for our three newsstand titles, except for the first two issues of *Aliens*, which are designed by Rian Hughes. Titan have been enormously helpful to me right from the word go and I'm very happy with them."

In its rush for a place by *The Sun*, however, Dark Horse has not lost sight of the importance of generating British (and European) creator-owned projects. Richardson again: "Basically, this is our first step to make relationships over here with creators, and we'll be co-ordinating other European creators out of this office too." Editor Hansom takes up the point: "As well as getting British creators to work on books like *Aliens*, we are also encouraging them to come up with their own projects: *Accident Man*, previously in *Toxic!*, is now appearing as a Dark Horse title by Pat Mills and Duke Mighten. *Sex Warriors* is another strip from *Toxic!* that we will be picking up primarily for the direct sales market. Plus great new characters like *Propeller Man* by Matthias Schultheiss from Germany."

Business is certainly brisk at Dark Horse: throughout the interview the phones were ringing nonstop with creators wanting to get in on the act. Yet to date the British office's shortlist of creator-owned projects appears to be, well, a mite short. Liliana Bolton is quick to clear up the apparent discrepancy: "I would rather announce a creator deal *after* contracts have gone through in preference to naming names beforehand. We are talking to a lot of the biggest and best creators, both British and American, and we do have many of them already working for us, but they're not specifically working for Dark Horse International, because their stuff will also be published in the US. The *Aliens: Sacrifice* series is a case in point: it will see print here first and then go over to the US."

Liliana Bolton's reticence about the British release schedule is in stark contrast with Mike Richardson's high profile cataloguing of forthcoming American releases. Nonetheless, quietly or noisily, both are extremely confident about the future. Through conviction as much as necessity, Dark Horse may just have hit upon the right strategy to confound the sceptics' predictions. Who says nice guys finish last? **CW**

COLIN MACNEIL



Judge Dredd/Mechanismo © Fleetway Editions

ONE OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL COMIC STRIPS IN RECENT YEARS HAS BEEN 'AMERICA', PAINTED IN STUNNING COLOUR BY COLIN MACNEIL. SINCE THEN HE'S DRAWN BATMAN AND THE FORTHCOMING 'MECHANISMO' WHICH REUNITES HIM WITH WRITER JOHN WAGNER. MARTIN CONAGHAN ASKS THE QUESTIONS.

If you take a close look at British comics over the past few years, and count on your hands the number of artists who have made as big an impact on the industry as Colin MacNeil, you would still have plenty of fingers left to spare. The only name that immediately springs to mind for his remarkable rise to fame is Simon Bisley, but that's about it. Few artists can boast the achievements that Colin has made in the short time he has been in comics – considering the number of publications that have gone off to the great recycling plant in the sky recently, taking some potentially great artists with them.

Colin's work has appeared frequently in *2000AD* and the *Judge Dredd Megazine* since he drew his first 'Future Shock' for *2000AD* six years ago.

He now has two graphic novel compilations published, has painted an assortment of covers, and his work recently appeared in DC's *Legends Of The Dark Knight* a one-shot story called 'Mercy', written by Dan Abnett and Andy Lanning.

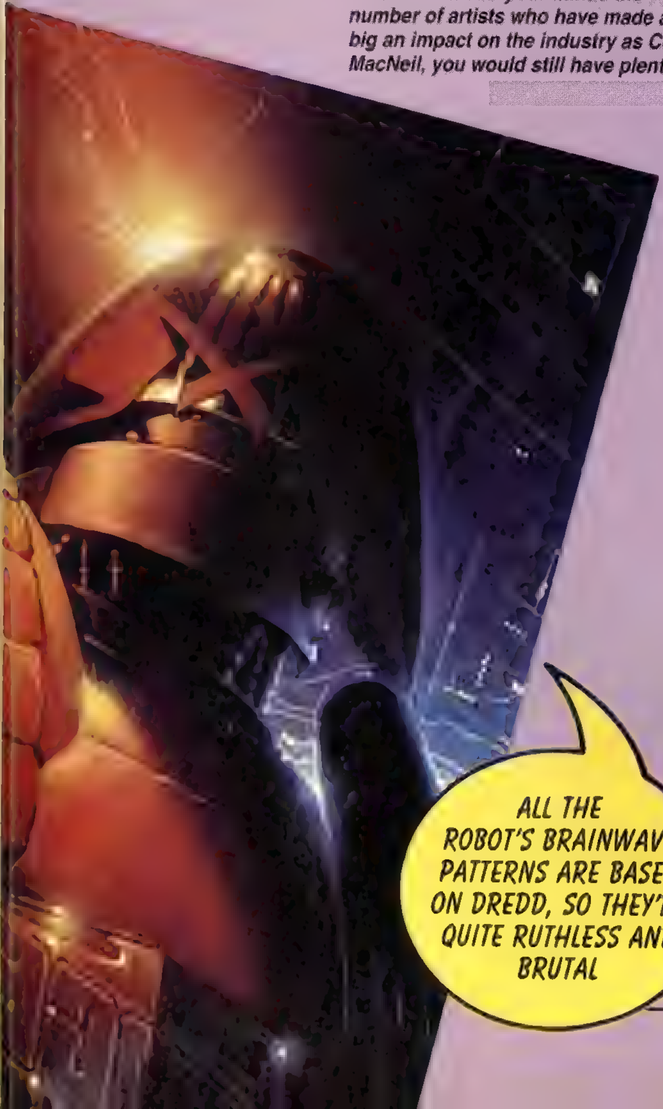
"The whole story has been a good year and a half in the making," Colin explains. "We approached Archie goodwin at GLASCAC last year about it. I had spoken to Andy and Dan and they wanted me to do some *Punisher* stuff for them, but that never really got off the ground, so they fancied doing a Batman. But D.C. usually like a team already set up before they're approached with ideas, so I went up to Archie and showed him some of my work. I explained about Dan and Andy, who went over to America for a meeting with D.C., taking over a proposal for the script along with some drawings of Batman I had done. D.C. went for it. It took quite some time to do the script: I actually got it around October last year and started doing the pencils then, but I was doing other things at the time and never got into it fully. It wasn't until January of this year that I started working on it in earnest and it took me about a month to do the whole thing.

"I've no plans to do any more Batman at the moment, as I've been working on a new, eleven part story for the *Judge Dredd Megazine* called 'Mechanismo', written by John Wagner. I'm doing the first six episodes and Pete Doherty is taking over for the last five. He's been doing some great stuff on 'Judgement Day', and I think he'll do a great job. It's set just after the Necropolis in Mega-City One, before Judgement Day. Most of the Judges have been killed during the Necropolis war and there aren't enough left to patrol the streets. So they come up with the idea for 'robot' Judges which they can mass produce to make a very efficient Judge Force. All the robots' brain-wave patterns are based on Dredd, so they're quite ruthless and brutal."

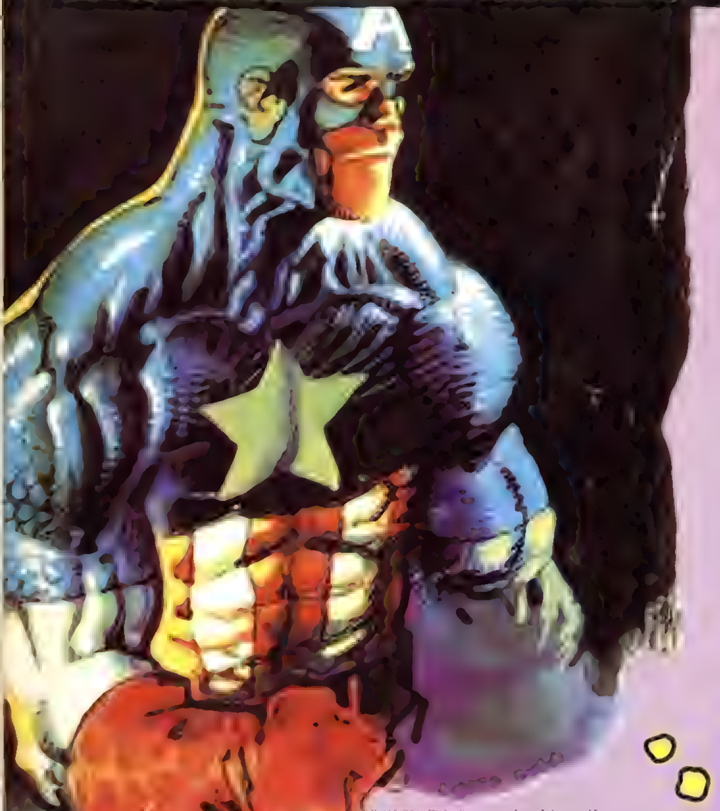
. . . TO BE HONEST I DON'T READ A LOT OF COMICS . . .

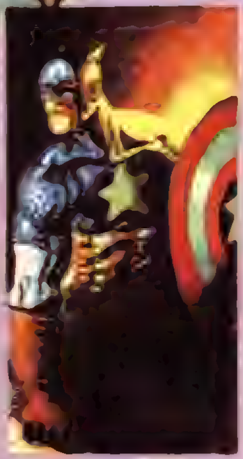
Much of the work Colin has produced since he entered comics has been written by John Wagner, 'America' in the Megazine, the Chopper story 'Song of The Surfer' in *2000AD* and a few Judge Dredd's. How does he feel about working with one of the biggest and most prolific writers in British comics?

"It doesn't bother me at all, John and I get along well, simply because we've



ALL THE ROBOT'S BRAINWAVE PATTERNS ARE BASED ON DREDD, SO THEY'RE QUITE RUTHLESS AND BRUTAL





Captain America © Marvel Comics

worked together so often. If I have any problems with a story, I just ring him up and talk it over. With 'Mechanismo' he wanted something totally 'inhuman', so I came up with a few ideas of my own, but every time I took it to him it didn't seem quite right – John knew exactly what he wanted the robots to look like, but nobody else had a clue. Eventually we just stuck with my original idea.

"There's a good possibility for a sequel to 'Mechanismo', though I doubt if I'll be doing it. I may do some other, shorter stories for *2000AD* over the next year, possibly some Dredd's, but when I finish 'Mechanism', I'll mainly be working for Marvel, namely a *Tales Of Suspense* graphic novel, written by James Robinson, which will feature Captain America and Iron Man. That should take up most of my time."

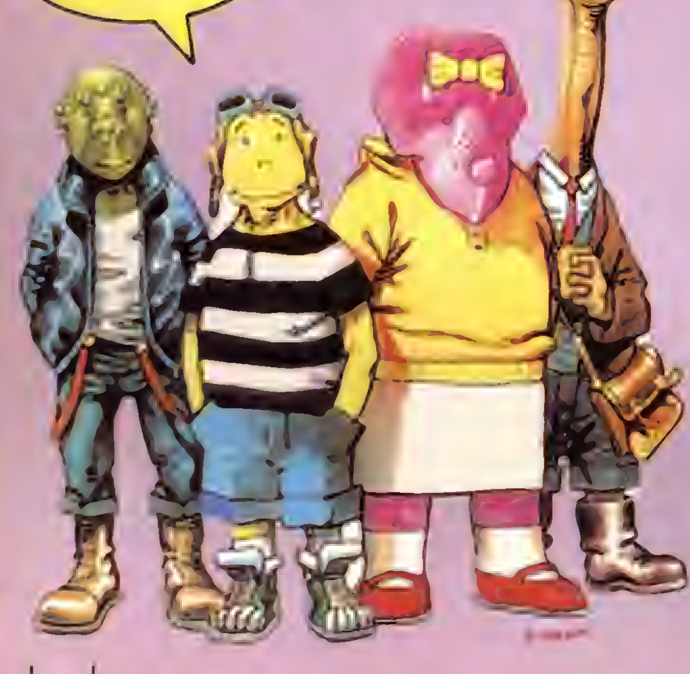
Colin established himself in the industry in a remarkably short period, succeeding Carlos Ezquerra on *2000AD*'s Strontium Dog, going on to chronicle the death of Johhny Alpha. I asked him how he got into the fortunate position he now finds himself in, and how he handled killing Alpha?

"The short story is, that I sent some stuff off to *2000AD*, they liked it and gave me a strip. The longer version is, that I knew Cam Kennedy through a teacher at my school. I sent some stuff to Cam and he liked it. He told me what parts to change and what areas to concentrate on, and that I send it in, even though I wasn't really sure about submitting any work. He told me exactly who to send it to – which was a bit of an advantage. They liked what they saw and gave me a 'Future Shock'. Things just snowballed from there.

"I was quite surprised when I heard they were actually killing Johnny Alpha off. I thought they would have left an opening for him to return, but after what I did to him it doesn't look quite so likely now. However, I would have liked to have done a bigger S.D. story."

A TALES OF SUSPENSE GRAPHIC NOVEL . . . WHICH WILL FEATURE CAPTAIN AMERICA AND IRON MAN

. . . I'M VERY EXCITED ABOUT IT!



There is definitely something quite unique about Colin's style of art. When we spoke, behind us was an original page from 'America' hanging on the wall – a splash page from the story depicting a 'perp' being blown to pieces. Very graphic stuff indeed, and even Simon Bisley has said that Colin's 'America' was the best Dredd to date. Even established artists look to each other for new ideas and techniques, so what artists does Colin particularly like himself?

"There are the favourites that I've had for years – Mike McMahon and Cam Kennedy. I'm also a great fan of Howard Chaykin, but I like the style of Adam Kubert who did the *Batman versus Predator* story and the art John Ridgway did for *My Name Is Chaos* was good.

"Everyone has an influence of some sort. I'd say mine was Carlos Ezquerra, along with McMahon and Kennedy; they're the three that forged my style when I started off. At first I was a Kennedy clone then I was an Ezquerra clone; you can see bits of each that I've melded into my own style.

"I don't like everything about any particular artist, just the things that attract my attention. To be honest I don't read a lot of comics, just the occasional one that people recommend to me. I'm not a great collector of comics either, I'd much rather wait and buy the trade paperback at half the price of the individual comics.

"I would probably pick up something by Mike Mignola, even though I might not buy it. I'm not really a fan in the 'fanboy' sense, I used to collect comics like *Warlord, Action* and *2000AD* – I still have them all – but occasionally I would pick up *Spider-Man* for two or three months, then stop and never get it again, or *Silver Surfer* when it first came out in the black and white format, I got the first ten or twelve issues and then it seemed to lose its initial appeal.

So what of element of comics does he consider foremost when working?

"To me, the most important thing about a comic is the artwork, probably because I'm an artist. If a comic has substandard artwork – there's a good chance that I won't pick it up. It's like that with films too, you may not get a particularly good storyline, but the visual impact of attractive sets can make up for most drawbacks.

"I'd say the quality of British comics is much better than the Americans' because our art is so varied – there's not really any particular 'British' style as opposed to America. Marvel and DC have pretty much the same way of working: a lot of American artists seem to aspire to be Jim Lee, or whoever the artist of the day is, so you get a lot of artists trying to be Jim Lee."

As more British artists make the move to the American market, subtle changes are being made to the particular style that companies like DC and Marvel are famed for, I asked him if he came across any problems whilst working for D.C. and if he was made to stick to any kind of framework when drawing the Batman story.

"There weren't any real restrictions on *Legends*, just so long as it's drawn in an understandable style and doesn't go over the top so badly that people don't know what's going on. Occasionally, I'm asked not to put so much violence in next time, but that's about the limit to my talks with the editors."

So, if he says he has no plans to do anymore Batman stories, what, apart from 'Mechanismo' and 'Tales of Suspense' is he going to do next?

FUTURE SHOCKS

"I was recently asked to do some covers for Marvel's *Savage Sword of Conan* and *Conan The Barbarian*, which was the one thing I've always wanted to do, and they suggested that if I wanted, I could do a short fill-in on the book – Conan has been one of my long time favourites. The editor who phoned me up to ask me if I was interested said he had read an interview where I said I'd love to do some Conan stuff – so I suppose I should mention something in this interview and maybe I'll get some more work!

"I was working on 'Road to Hell' with Dwayne McDuffy and Matt Wayne, for *Toxic*, but as everyone knows, *Toxic* is no longer with us. So the story is still languishing around, looking for a home. The only other projects I'm working on are in collaboration with my older brother Roderick. These include 'Windmaster' which is an epic tale of good versus evil (as always) set against the struggle for power in an energy starved Apocalyptic future. There's also 'Terry Dactyl' – where Rupert the Bear meets 1,000,000 years B.C. meets Peanuts. It's essentially a story for kids. I know it sounds unlikely, but I assure you, it's the most enjoyable project I've ever been involved with. I'm very excited about it, even if the publishers we've approached aren't. Finally, there's 'Stripey', an ongoing project of which one story was to appear in *A1* book 6b, but since that isn't going to come out as far as I know, look out for it in an upcoming issue of *A1* from Epic later

CONTINUED ON PAGE 65 ▶

SCIENCE FICTION World

ISSUE 0

DR WHO

TERRY PRATCHETT

HARRY HARRISON

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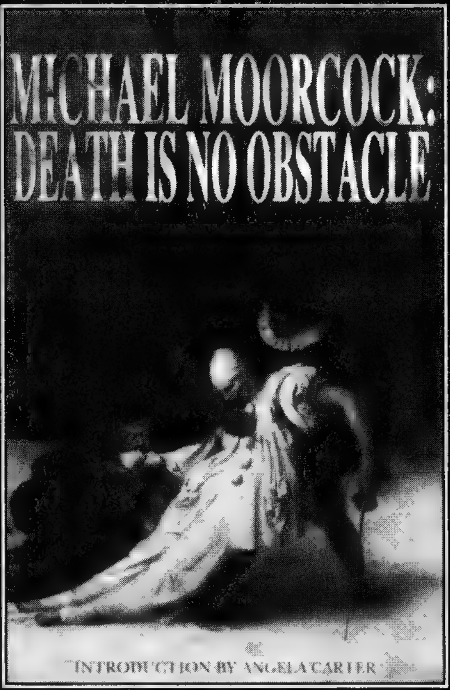

by
COLIN GREENLAND

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ANGELA CARTER

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Cover: Jim Burns provides a stunning cover for our special insert, and we would like to thank Jim and Val Payne of Young Artists for their help.

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HAVE TAR

WILL TRA

GARY RUSSELL LOOKS BACK OVER 30 YEARS OF DR. WHO.

Dr Who © BBC

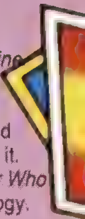
Mention the words Doctor Who to the average person in the street and you are almost guaranteed some sort of distinctive answer. Someone in their Twenties will probably mention floppy hats, long scarfs and pastiche; older people will remember William Hartnell's grumpy old man and the Daleks while youngsters will chortle about Sylvester McCoy's question-mark sweater and the incomprehensibility of the scripts! One thing that is certain though, very few people will say "I don't know what you're talking about".

In a world where materialism goes in rapidly shortening fads and fashions, *Doctor Who* has truly become a British institution, loved and loathed, mocked and defended but always recognised. As a television icon, if not the hero for the Twentieth Century that some newspaper critics declared in the Seventies, the programme has been a real mirror of its times, both of the television drama series and of the viewers loves and hates.

BBC
EARTHSHOCK

Doctor Who had a less auspicious start, lost on a Saturday tea-time on 23rd November 1963 – twenty-four hours after the world was shocked out of its post-war complacency by the assassination of John F Kennedy – ironically, an event that would be referred to twice in future *Who* stories, either as a background for a plotline (*The Deadly Assassin*, 1976) or a method of establishing a setting (*Remembrance of the Daleks*, 1988). The after effect of Kennedy's death caused the BBC to repeat the opening episode, *An Unearthly Child*, the following week to enable presumably now-recovered viewers the chance to catch up. Even today, programmes rarely get repeated that quickly!

However, whilst the story of a strange old man and his grand-daughter whizzing back to stone age times in a police telephone call box that was bigger on the inside than out, with only two school teachers to aid them, might not seem enough to set the imagination alight, what came next certainly was! *The Daleks* written by Tony Hancock's recently sacked gag writer Terry Nation changed everything. Even Sydney Newman (the BBC's Head of Drama who had created the series but demanded of the inexperienced female producer "No bug eyed monsters") had to admit that the Daleks were impressive. Within twelve months, Britain was gripped in the height of Dalekmania – a craze that makes Batmania or Turtlemania a mere spit in the ocean. If it could be made, you could get it with Daleks on! Apart from the obvious books, records and toys came wallpaper, letraset transfers and jigsaw puzzles, plates and slippers . . . the list is endless. And not just the Daleks, but general Who merchandise is as strong in 1992 as it was in 1964. Indeed, today we still have novels (both adaptations of tv episodes and now a run of new adventures) and a comic strip. Indeed, the comic strip began in late 1964 in *TV Comic*, went into *Countdown* in the early Seventies, then *TV Action* before returning to *TV Comic* in 1975. In 1979 Marvel took over the reigns with *Doctor Who Weekly*, which itself regenerated into *Doctor Who Monthly* and is still going strong today, rapidly approaching its 200th issue as *Doctor Who Magazine*. Ironically, this has meant that the ongoing, unbroken run of *Doctor Who* comic strip has actually existed longer than the show that spawned it.



But one other thing that *Doctor Who* was at the forefront of was technology. No matter how often the series was considered a joke for its wobbly sets, thick blue-outlined colour separation sequences and obviously wired models, it nevertheless created those systems. Such everyday television techniques as Quantel, Harry, C80, synch-slave all broke their teeth on *Who*. Whilst everyone was marvelling at the astonishing Dykstra system effects on *Star Wars*, no one remembered that the British technicians that helped create them had learned their craft on *Doctor Who*, doing the same effects on a budget that wouldn't have supplied the *Star Wars* crew with tea for one day!

Throughout the Sixties, *Doctor Who* was pushing ahead the boundaries of what television (and therefore the film industry, on both sides of the Atlantic) could achieve, both successfully and not so. Television drama as a whole during the Sixties took a bent towards fantasy –

RDIS,

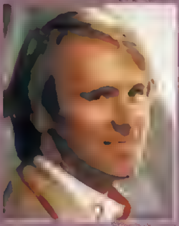
VEL

Doctor Who ran alongside such classics as *The Avengers*, *The Prisoner* and the much-loved Gerry Anderson shows like *Thunderbirds* and *UFO*. But *Doctor Who* was more than just science fiction: it often carried a message, but unlike its US counterpart *Star Trek* it never sacrificed its story content to make the point – it was subtle as opposed to *Trek*'s heavy handedness.

Seventies and Eighties 'drama-documentary' programmes, ranging from *Doomwatch* and *Survivors* through to the likes of *Threads* and *Edge of Darkness* all owe much to the history of *Doctor Who*. For it was *Who* that gave the likes of Kit Pedler his first platform on which to warn the world of the danger of dehumanisation through the Cybermen (*The Tenth Planet*), or man's reliance on computers, warning that a machine is only as good as its operator (*The War Machines*). The effects of Global Warming (*Enemy of the World*), the cavalier attitude of big business regardless of the consequences regarding 'progress' (*The Green Death*) and pointed reminders of where we could head if not careful (*Colony in Space*, *The Mutants*). Of course, *Doctor Who* was a science fiction adventure series, but it challenged, it required thought and intelligence on the part of the viewer.

As such, *Doctor Who* opened itself up to two different camps: the critics and the cultists. To become a cult, something must be slightly abnormal, slightly off-centre and preferably non-conformist. The programme has certainly been all of these things – mainly because of one particular aspect, the Doctor himself. Or selves.

During the Eighties it became acceptable for different actors to play the same characters – nowhere more so than in American soap operas. We think nothing now of such interesting things that Blake Carrington in *Dynasty* has actually seen every one of his children go through total physical metamorphosis, but in 1966, William Hartnell was the Doctor. Then a week later, Patrick Troughton was the Doctor – no effort was made to make him look like Hartnell, in fact every aspect of the series was heightened to say that this wasn't Hartnell, but it *was still* the Doctor. In 1970, Jon Pertwee proved it could be done once again, and so by 1974 Tom Baker's assumption of the role was shrugged off, by both the public and the series regular supporting characters with a resigned 'Oh well, here we go again". However, this whole aspect of regeneration underlined the science fiction aspect of *Doctor Who* –the lead character was an alien. As the years went by we learnt many other things about him that totally disproved our first conception of him being a fuddy duddy old man who happened to have a time machine. He has two hearts, a respiratory by-pass system, less oxygen in his blood, can be put into self-recuperative trances, can knock someone out with a finger poked on the forehead and so on. Successive interpretations of the character have further stressed aspects of this alien quality. Whilst Troughton represented the Sixties rebel against the establishment and Pertwee the Seventies all action hero, it took the Tom Baker version to really hammer home the alienesque reality of the Doctor. He became a disowned wanderer without a base and with a succession of companions, each one leaving to get on with their own mortal lives whilst the Doctor remained part of a larger picture.



When Baker left after seven years in the part, a complete and radical change was necessary – the alienness was dropped in favour of a knowledgeable big-brotherly type in the youthful form of Peter Davison. But if he lacked the otherworldy aspects of his predecessor, Davison's replacement went totally the other way. Aggressive, apparently heartless and totally inhuman, Colin Baker's short tenure in the role was complicated by internal politiking at the BBC. Whilst Baker II was totally committed to the series, more so than any of his predecessors, the BBC weren't so. A series of internal disputes and policy changes meant that after just one full series, the show took a break. It was a well publicised break, misrepresented (understandably) as total cancellation. The programme did return, with Baker, but for many, the problem had been set – the general public as opposed to the faithful followers still thought it had been cancelled. More disputes led the Baker's contract not being renewed and a seventh actor, Sylvester McCoy filling the vacant TARDIS.

McCoy's Doctor further enhanced the alien aspects of the show – he took it into much darker realms, the character becoming far more manipulative and shady – whereas Tom Baker's Doctor was trusted without question. Davison's because he was simply so nice and even Colin Baker's because under the gruff exterior, you saw a heart of gold shine through. McCoy shrouded the character in mystery. Over twenty eight years, such of the mystery of the Doctor had been exposed, thus turning his adventures (especially during the mid-Tom Baker run) into a series of regurgitated plots lacking coherence and a sense of purpose, McCoy's tenure, however, tried to add new layers of mystique and give *Doctor Who* a sense of direction.

Sadly, in 1989, it all came to a standstill. Amidst expansive promises to the contrary, the BBC have to date failed to make a new series of *Doctor Who*. To the many who watched it, this is a tragedy. To the many who didn't, it was no great shakes. "Well, it hadn't been any good since Pertwee left" or "After Tom Baker left, I couldn't take it seriously" became common phrases of the critics who frequently disparaged the show, despite not having actually watched it. This is a shame because one thing *Doctor Who* never stopped being was intelligent or challenging. It never stopped making the viewer quest on the world about him and worry about the futures it portrayed. But it was perhaps too subtle at times, replacing message with symbolism and burying the plot beneath sophisticated scripts made for the video age. Whilst *Warriors' Gate* and *Ghost Light* received criticisms for their apparent lack of cohesive story, a second viewing clearly indicates that not to be the case, but should something made for television have to rely on a nation of video owners to be watchable? Probably not, but such oddballesque adventures were the extraordinary, not the norm.

To many people, *Doctor Who* has always been about the monsters, Daleks and Cybermen; Yeti and Quarks; Ice Warriors and Autons; Sontarans and Maras – monsters that exterminated, converted, ate or manipulated their victims. Monsters that could destroy our planet on a whim, or erase the entire universe out of malice. And the Doctor stood up to them all and regardless of actual story content, characters and situations, ultimately *Doctor Who* is an adventure serial about the struggle between good and evil. A story where evil cannot win because the Doctor is a hero and heroes have to win. The fact that to different people it also represented different things is a pleasant consequence but is ultimately unimportant. What is important is that over its twenty-eight year run (and we're still assured by the BBC that there's no reason why it cannot run for another twenty-eight, one day) it constantly entertained, and in an era where trivia, minutee and detail has become the basis of ridiculous criticism, it should perhaps be reassessed and remembered as such. Good, fun entertainment that has pleased and satisfied over one hundred million people worldwide. Not bad for an old man flying round time and space in a rickity police telephone call box. . .

*(Gary Russell, is the editor of **Dr Who Magazine**, **The Complete Dr Who** and **Hell's Angel** for Marvel Comics)*

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BOOK NEWS

The most significant development in British publishing this Autumn is the launch of Orion, the new house set-up by Anthony Cheetham following his departure from Random Century earlier this year. Orion's science fiction, fantasy and horror imprint, Millennium, kicks off with three titles.

The White Mists of Power, by Kristine Kathryn Rusch (editor of *The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction* and Pulphouse's publisher) is the first volume in a high fantasy trilogy. Molly Cochran and Warren Murphy's **The Forever King** adds a new spin to the Arthurian myth. It's a fast-paced contemporary thriller about a hunt for the Holy Grail. The authors co-wrote the 'Destroyer' series, several of which were filmed, and Murphy was responsible for the story on which *Lethal Weapon 2* was based. Word is that megabucks have already been paid for *The Forever King*'s movie rights. The third title, Vernor Vinge's **A Fire Upon The Deep**, is a galaxy-spanning space opera. Millenium's future schedule includes new work from Thomas M Disch, Michael Swanwick, Robert Asprin and Angus Wells. They will also be publishing a handsome fourteen volume uniform edition of Michael Moorcock's work.

October sees the appearance of two new books from bestselling fantasy author David Gemmell. **Stones Of Power** collects his four Sipstrassi novels into an omnibus; **In The Realm Of The Wolf** is the long-awaited sequel to **Waylander**. Both from Legend, which will be bringing us Tad Williams and Nina Kiriki Hoffman's **Child Of An Ancient City** in November. Williams is best known for his 'Memory, Sorrow and Thorn' fantasy trilogy.

Dorling Kindersley, primarily a children's publisher, have picked up UK rights to James Gurney's stunning **Dinotopia** and will be releasing it here in October.

Gollancz have Harry Harrison's delightfully entitled **Bill The Galactic Hero On The Planet Of The Hippies From Hell** lined-up for October. Terry Pratchett's latest Discworld, **Lords and Ladies**, is due from them in November.

Ray Bradbury's new, non-*genre*, novel, **Green Shadows, White Whale**, is published by Harper Collins in October. It's based on his experiences working with John Huston on *Moby Dick* in Ireland during the early 50s. Harper also have **Whispers In The Dark**, an MR Jmes-like ghost story from Jonathan Aycliffe (better known as thriller writer Daniel Easterman), coming in November. Aycliffe's previous chiller was the superbly creepy **Naomi's Room**. Also in November: **A Dark And Hungry God Arises**, the third in Stephen Donaldson's five volume Gap series of space operas.

Harper Collins have paid a six-figure advance for Larry Niven and Jerry Pournelle's much-delayed sequel to **The Mote In God's Eye**. Originally called *The Mote in Murchison's Eye*, it has now been retitled **The Gripping Hand**.

Dan Simmons' **The Hollow Man** and Graham (*Dreamside*) Joyce's **Dark Sister** both come out from Headline in November.

Hodder's major offering the same month is James Herbert's new novel, **Portent**, a disaster/horror novel. They have Stephen King's **Dolores Claiborne** scheduled for next January. Stephen Jones' anthology of writings *about* Herbert, **By Horror Haunted**, appears from New English Library in October, same month as Piers Anthony's latest in the Xanth series, tastefully called **The Colour Of Her Panties. Worlds Enough and Time**, by Joe Haldeman, is a November release.

Oxford University Press are said to be planning a massive science fiction anthology. A treasury of original and reprint material, it's the first time OUP have entered the field.

Pan's line-up for October to December includes Freda Warrington's **A Taste Of Blood Wine**, Douglas Adams' **Hitch-Hiker's Omnibus**, Asimov and Silverberg's **Child Of Time** and Lois McMaster Bujold's **Borders Of Infinity**.

Douglas Adams' fifth volume in his Hitch Hiker's 'trilogy', **Mostly Harmless**, has a 5th October launch from Heinemann. The story takes place twenty years after the events outlined in the previous books.

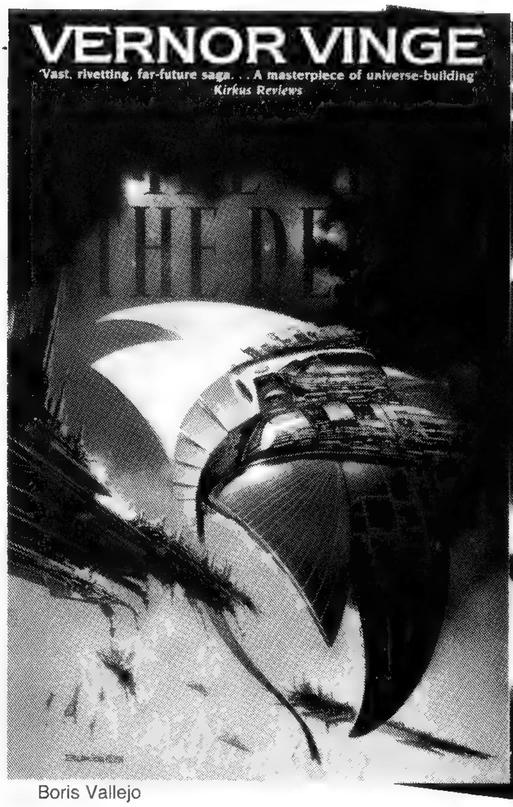
Simon & Schuster's Autumn list includes the new 'Virginia Andrews', **Twilight's Children**; and Kim Newman's **Anno Dracula**, which is about an alternate Victorian England ruled by Queen Victoria and her husband Count Dracula!

Angela Carter's posthumous anthology, **The Second Book Of Virago Fairy Tales**, has had an appreciation by Marina Warner appended for its October release.

In October Virgin are issuing **George Lucas – The Creative Impulse**, by Charles Champlin, with a foreword by Steven Spielberg. Heavily illustrated, it's claimed to be the definitive account of the man's life and work.

There was some doubt whether Isaac Asimov's last novel, **Forward The Foundation** had actually been completed before his death. It seems it was, because the foreign, book club and magazine serialisation rights are now being offered. **Forward** ties-up the loose ends of his most renowned series.

Frank M Robinson's **The Dark Beyond The Stars** has won the Lambda Award for best gay sf/fantasy novel of 1991. **The Gilda Stories**, by Jewelle Gomez, picked up the lesbian award. How very different to the home of our own dear queen . . .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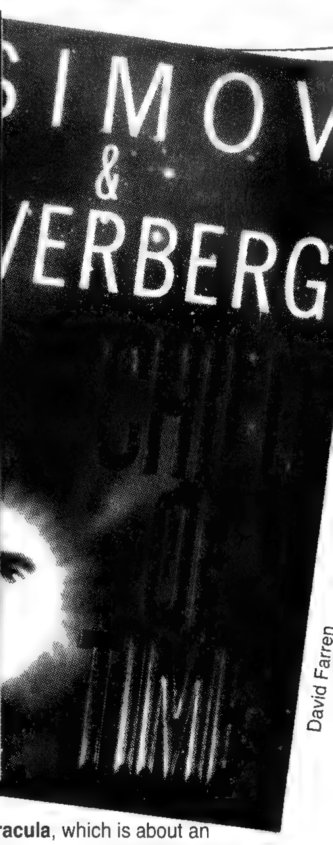
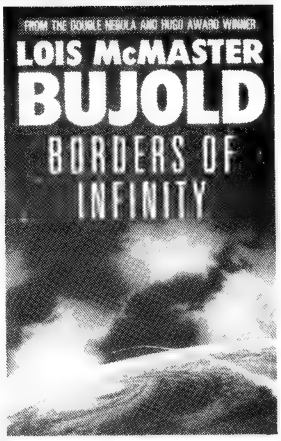
'Vast, rivetting, far-future saga. . . A masterpiece of universe-building'
Kirkus Reviews
THE DE

Boris Vallejo



David Farren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LOIS McMASTER
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BORDERS OF
INFINITY

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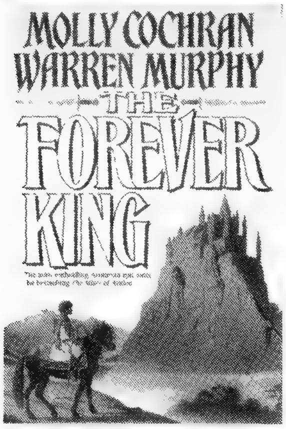
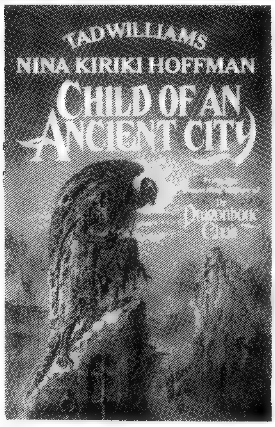


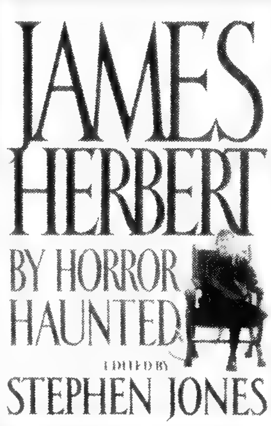


Bruce Pennington

PIERS ANTHONY

Mick Posen

stephen
KING
DOLORES CLAIBORNE



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TRIPPING THE LIGHT FANTAS

DAVID HOWE EXPLORES THE MAGICAL DISCWORLD WITH AUTHOR TERRY PRATCHETT

TERRY PRATCHETT
A DISCWORLD NOVEL
PYRAMIDS
TERRY PRATCHETT
A DISCWORLD NOVEL
WITCHES ABROAD
TERRY PRATCHETT
TERRY
PRATCHETT
LORDS AND LADIES

Cover art by Josh Kirby

Somewhere on Earth there may be someone who has not come across the work of Terry Pratchett. His books regularly grace the upper reaches of the bestseller lists and each new title is received with even more acclaim than the last.

For Terry, however, writing has always been in his blood. "I started wriiting," he explains, "because when I was about twelve, a teacher at school asked us to write a short story as a project. I got twenty out of twenty for mine and it was printed in the school magazine."

Inspired by this success, Terry polished the story up a bit, got his aunt to type it out, and sent it off to a magazine called *Science Fantasy* who bought it. "I was paid fourteen pounds and bought myself a typewriter with the money. My mother was so impressed that she paid for me to have touch typing lessons, leaving me with a typewriter and the ability to use it quickly."

Terry's first novel, *The Carpet People*, was started when he was about seventeen and finished when he turned twenty, by which time he was working as a journalist for his local newspaper.

Colin Smythe, a small press publisher, saw the manuscript and published it in 1971, followed by four other books: *The Dark Side of the Sun, Strata, The Colour of Magic* and *The Light Fantastic.*

With this last title, it became apparent to both Terry and Colin that there was a bit of a problem. "It was a bit embarrassing with the publication of *The Light Fantastic*," Terry reveals, "because we realised that Colin had got hold of something which a small press publisher dreads: a best selling book. Colin was not set up to cater for a national demand and it was clear to both of us that sooner or later things would have to change, so we decided to do something while we were still friends. We reached an arrangement whereby he became my agent and he arranged for Gollancz to publish hardcovers of the next three books: *Equal Rites, Mort* and *Sorcery.*

"And the rest," Terry smiles, "is geography!"

The books are now known generically as the Discworld novels, and feature a world in which magic works; one major difference is that the Discworld

TERRY PRATCHETT
A DISCWORLD NOVEL
REAPER MAN
REAPER MAN
Terry Pratchett

TIC

ONE OF THE MORE POPULAR CHARACTERS IS DEATH . . . WHO HAS MADE AN APPEARANCE IN EVERY BOOK SO FAR

is flat and is held up by four giant elephants which are in turn standing on the back of Great A'Tuin, a giant turtle which swims eternally through space.

"Ludicrous though that concept may be," Terry admits, "the idea that the world is flat and goes through space on the back of an enormous turtle is one of the great commonplace myths of mankind. The four elephants were a kind of Indo-European subset of that myth. I embroidered it an awful lot, but the basic shape of the Discworld is straight out of mythology."

While the world they inhabit may be somewhat fanciful, the characters are anything but. Terry delights in creating recognisable people. His popular band of players include Rincewind the wizard, his faithful Luggage (a packing case on legs which is devoted to Rincewind and follows him everywhere, barging into people and things with no regard for decorum), Granny Weatherwax, a warts-and-all witch who deals with the rigours of the modern world in the only way she knows how (rudeness and bluster mainly) and the Librarian of the magical Unseen University who has been accidentally transformed into a large orangutan.

One of the more popular characters is Death. Death is an entity who speaks in hollow capitals, whom everyone meets at least once, and who has made an appearance in every book so far.

"Death came about because I needed to get a particular gag in *The Colour of Magic* and he had to be a mobile creature. So I introduced him, and subsequently realised that there was a lot of mileage in the character as well as being fun to write for. After a while I realised that the readers were more or less waiting for him to turn up somewhere in the proceedings too, so he tends to have a walk-on part in most of the books."

Terry reveals that he tends to think of his characters as "film stars under contract" and he uses them as and when the idea is right for them to appear. As he dryly comments, "If I listened to feedback I would have written thirteen books about Rincewind and the Luggage. I occasionally aim to go in new directions so that maybe the reader can't be one hundred per cent certain about what Terry's going to write next.

"Rincewind hasn't appeared since *Eric*, and he will not appear again until I have a book which I know will be a suitable vehicle for him. Rather than re-use old characters, I prefer to invent new ones to do different things with.

"Cut-Me-Own-Throat Dibbler [a salesman who appears whenever there is a large crowd of people, with a tray around his neck, laden with inedible pies, suspect sausages and various other partially cooked animal parts on sticks] very clearly turns up in *Small Gods*, although his name in that book is Cut-Me-Own-Hand-Off Dhblah. His appearance was like Sidney James turning up in a film and basically playing Sidney James – as he did. It's a signal to the readers that this is a character we know and love."

Moving onto the subject of humour, I commented that it seemed apparent that while Terry took writing very seriously, he was not necessarily serious about what he was actually writing about. Terry is quick to point out that I am completely wrong in my assessment.

"I am quoting almost verbatim G K Chesterton," he admonished, "who said that it is quite wrong to think that 'serious' is the opposite of 'funny'. The opposite of 'serious' is 'not serious'. The opposite of 'funny' is 'not funny'. Now there are some people who are both 'funny' and 'serious'. Ben Elton might be considered to be one of those. And there are some people who are both 'funny' and 'not serious' and we might put Benny Hill in that category. There are even some people who are 'not funny' and 'not serious' and we might put John Major there . . . the point is that these things are no more opposite than 'black' is the opposite of 'triangular'. So there are some things in the books that I take very seriously indeed but you have to work out which bits they are!"

MOVING PICTURES

Terry revealed that he was happier with the later Discworld books. "For example, the subject of *Moving Pictures* always fascinated me. One of the things that has happened in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries is that people have been given opportunities where there were previously none. The central myth of Hollywood is that some good-looking waitress can go off to Hollywood and become the most famous woman in the world. We know it didn't work for nine hundred and ninety nine thousand of them but it did for one or two and that's all you need to build up the myth. *Moving Pictures* makes that point. It was about fame and dreams; I don't like Hollywood but you can't help but recognise the incredible pull it has."

So far, the Discworld novels have been appearing at the rate of two a year but the rate is going to slow down to one a year following publication of the next book, *Lords and Ladies* in November "There will not be a Discworld novel published in the spring although there will be another young adult novel (*Johnny and the Dead*) which isn't finished yet."

This, Terry explains, is not due to a lack of ideas. "It's simply that two things are happening. One is that for five years I've been writing an average of close to three successful books a year, and I thought it might be nice to spend six months just enjoying myself; and the other thing is that the business of being Terry Pratchett is beginning to occupy more and more time. There is the mail, of course, there are talks, and requests for signings and to attend conventions all over the world. All this takes up time and I need to have the time to manage it all."

As Terry is relatively prolific, I asked whether writing came easily to him, or whether he really had to work at it. "Yes," he replied with a smile. "Both the statements you have just made are correct. I find it easy to write *and* I have to work at it. Sometimes thousands of words will come spilling out effortlessly onto the page, but there are other times when you sit there and you just cannot work. But yes, I enjoy doing it. It seems a natural thing to do, because throughout my life, by and large, I have had to assemble words in a certain pleasing way in order to make a living.

Lords and Ladies, "bears the same relationship to *A Midsummer Night's Dream* as *Wyrd Sisters* bore to *Macbeth*," hints Terry. "It has the witches in again. The one after that won't appear until November 1993, and that will probably be set in Ankh Morpork and feature the guards [from *Guards! Guards!*] and the Fresh Start Club for the Newly Undead [from *Reaper Man*], and possibly even Gaspode [from *Moving Pictures*]. It's going to be what you might call an Ankh Morpork-intensive one.

"Some people might like me to kill off all the Discworld characters and run the turtle into a black hole, but I like them too much. It's obviously going to end one day – they'll probably put the last manuscript on my coffin – but it is going to slow down for the moment because there are other things I want to do."

Terry
PRATCHETT
SMALL GODS
A Discworld Novel
PRATCHETT
SMALL GODS

THE NOVELS OF TERRY PRATCHETT

The Discworld Novels:
The Colour Of Magic (Colin Smythe, 1983)
The Light Fantastic (Colin Smythe, 1986)
Equal Rights (Gollancz, 1987)
Mort (Gollancz, 1987)
Wyrd Sisters (Gollancz, 1988)
Sourcery (Gollancz, 1988)
Pyramids (Gollancz, 1989)
Guards! Guards! (Gollancz, 1989)
Moving Pictures (Gollancz, 1990)
Eric (Gollancz, 1990)
Reaper Man (Gollancz, 1991)
Witches Abroad (Gollancz, 1991)
Small Gods (Gollancz, 1992)
Lords and ladies (Gollancz, 1992)

Others:
The Carpet People (Colin Smythe, 1971)
The Dark Side of the Sun (Colin Smythe, 1976)
Strata (Colin Smythe, 1981)
Truckers (Doubleday, 1990)
Diggers (Doubleday, 1990)
Wings (Doubleday, 1990)
Good Omens (with Neil Gaiman; Gollancz, 1990)
Only You Can Save Mankind (Doubleday, 1992)
Johnny and the Dead (Doubleday, 1993)*

* = Forthcoming

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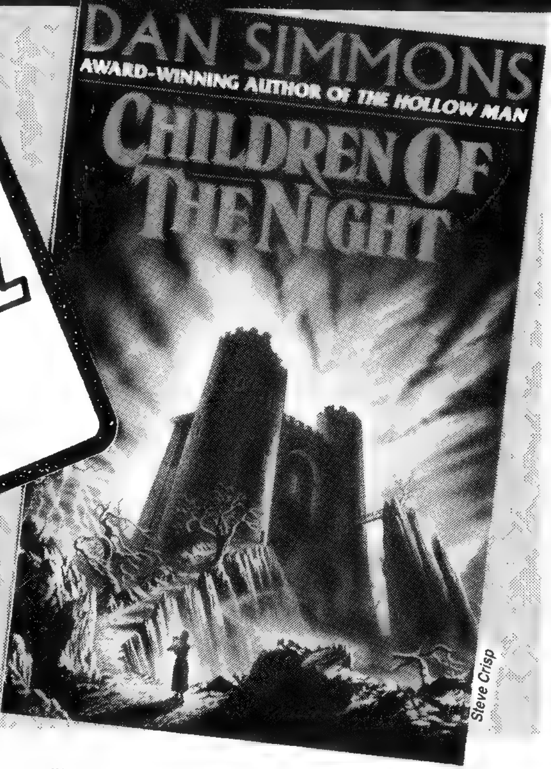
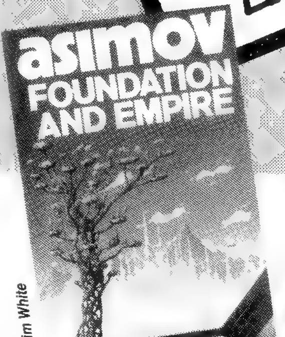
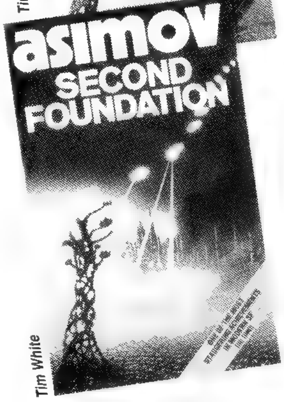


Steve Crisp

STAN NICHOLLS ROUND-UP OF WHAT'S NEW



Tim White

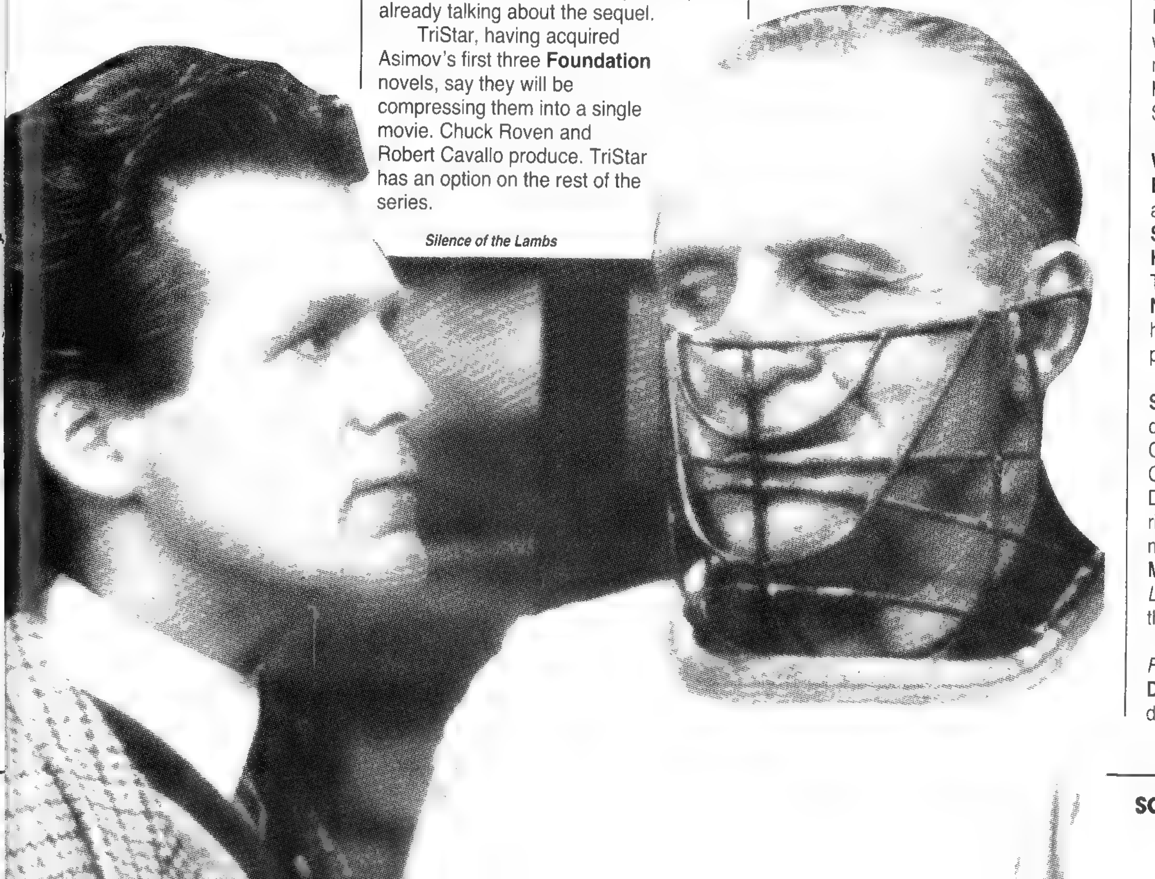


Tim White

Sf, fantasy and horror films, particularly the big-budget variety, are no more immune to shelving than other** genres **when recession bites. Despite the cold wind of economic reality sweeping Tinseltown, however, there are still some upcoming projects of interest to fantastic movie enthusiasts. But bear in mind the high casualty rate of development hell and don't hold your breath waiting for some of the following.

With rumours again circulating of a fourth **Star Wars** going into production next year, and Arthur C Clarke dropping hints about scripting a major sf picture, the word now is that Turner Entertainment, which holds the rights to MGM's **Forbidden Planet**, have agreed a re-make. Nelson Gidding has written a screenplay. Producer Lindsay Dunlap is already talking about the sequel.

TriStar, having acquired Asimov's first three **Foundation** novels, say they will be compressing them into a single movie. Chuck Roven and Robert Cavallo produce. TriStar has an option on the rest of the series.



Silence of the Lambs

Screenwriter Dan Waters, of **Batman Returns** fame, is adapting Heinlein's massive **Stranger in a Strange Land**. Sam Hamm, his co-writer on *Returns*, is tackling another classic, Alfred Bester's **The Demolished Man**. Brian De Palma and Oliver Stone previously abandoned this one.

Sylvester Stallion has begun work on **The Demolition Man**. He plays a cop brought out of cryogenic suspension in the 21st century to track down an escaped serial killer. Arnie on a stick?

Dan Simmons' excellent vampire novel, **Children of the Night**, has been bought by Warners for $385,000. Producer is Brian Taggert. Possible directors include Robert Aldrich and William Friedkin.

Fatherland, Robert Harris' alternate world novel in which Germany won the war, has been optioned by Mike Nichols.

Spielberg's Amblimation company is planning a $50 million musical cartoon version of Kipling's **Just So Stories**. Making his first excursion into the movies, Cameron (*Phantom, Cats, Miss Saigon*) Mackintosh co-produces.

Terry Jones will direct Mark Twain's **A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court**, from a script by Robert Mark Kamen, who co-wrote **Lethal Weapon 3**.

Another James Bond movie, again with Timothy Dalton, is in pre-production. Mel Gibson reputedly passed on playing 007 this time.

'Mr Science Fiction', Forrest J Ackerman, has clocked-up his forty-second movie cameo role in Jon Landis' **Innocent Blood**. FJA, who sold the film component of his remarkable collection to a German museum earlier this year, is still looking for someone to take the printed material. He's breaking-up the world's most comprehensive archive of sf and horror material because the City of Los Angeles reneged on an agreement to house it after his death.

Dracula

Francis Ford Coppola's **Dracula – The Untold Story**, his first *genre* effort since **Dementia 13** (1963), should be released around Christmas. In the 15th century, Dracula (Gary Oldman), sells his soul to the Devil following the death of his wife (Winona Ryder). Cut to Victorian London, where the count becomes obsessed with her lookalike, Mina Harker. Anthony Hopkins plays Van Helsing; James (*Hook*) Hart scripted. Pan won the tie-in race here, with the novelisation (Fred Saberhagen and Hart), a 'making of' book, and re-issue of Stoker's original novel.

Some recently announced sequels: **Warlock II: Armageddon**; **Philadelphia Experiment II** and, for those cuddly folk at Troma – **The Good, The Bad and The Subhamanoid**, follow-up to **Nuke 'Em High Part II: Subhumanoid Meltdown**. Troma also have **Sgt. Kabukiman NYPD**, a superhero story, and yuppie horror pic **Dead Dudes In The House** in production.

The sequel everyone wants to make, **Silence Of The Lambs II**, has bogged-down in horrendous legal complications. Orion, recently bankrupt, made the Oscar-winner; now veteran producer Dino De Laurentis claims to own the rights. He bases this on the fact that he made a film about Hannibal Lector, **Manhunter**, in 1986, Even reclusive *Lambs* author Thomas Harris is threatening to file suit.

Finally, the proposed *prequel* to *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* – **Who Discovered Roger Rabbit** – has been dropped. Shame.

Catch

THE

Harry Harrison calls it The Moment of Understanding. "You're seven or eight years old. You discover science fiction. Organs play and a shaft of light comes down. You're hooked for life, you know?"

He likens it to religious conversion. "Only more intelligent. A regular person might become a Catholic through some kind of revelation about the Virgin Mary. A science fiction guy says, 'Hey! Wouldn't it be neat to have a time machine and go visit her?' There's an intellectual as well as an emotional reaction involved in discovering sf, particularly if you come to it young, and that initial discovery can be very emotional."

Does the *genre* still press the same buttons for him? "Yes and no. I occasionally catch the rapture. But there's such crap being written now, and the old writers are all snuffing it, so I don't bother reading much these days. I prefer to create it for myself."

Nevertheless Harrison, born Henry Maxwell Dempsey and entering his sixty-seventh year, has been passionately and prolifically involved with the field since childhood. By the time he made his first professional short story sale – 'Rock Diver' for *Worlds Beyond* magazine in 1951 – he was already a long-standing enthusiast.

"I knew all the writers back in the forties in New York," he recalls, "and they cared about science fiction. Sf had an excitement then, but it was an intellectual excitement, not a financial one. The intellectual capacity in science fiction now is about the equal of Mills and Boon. I *love* it, and here I am reading just two or three books a year because so much of it has purple prose, holes in the plot and boring characters. There's a fascination with surface, too, particularly with cyberpunk. I'm not into knocking a whole school, and writers have to make a living, but don't tell me this stuff is the greatest thing since sliced bread."

He is financially comfortable himself now, but has an affection for the early days, despite the struggle to make ends meet. "I was living in England and Denmark, paid no taxes, and made three or four thousand dollars a year. You could get by on that, but it was no money at all really. Back at the start of my career it wasn't unusual to be paid a hundred pounds for a book. Then, about three years later, a little card would arrive saying, 'Royalties: six pounds, seven shillings and fourpence.' Money was hard to come by if you insisted on writing crazy stuff like science fiction, for God's sake."

When he sold that first story he was working as a comicbook artist. "I did that for ten years, and I drew and wrote hundreds of strips, including scripting the *Flash Gordon* and *Saint* comics." (He would later ghost a well-received *Saint* novel for creator Leslie Charteris.) During a spell in London, one of several places he has lived over the years, he worked for Fleetway, and with Sidney Jordan on *Jeff Hawke*.

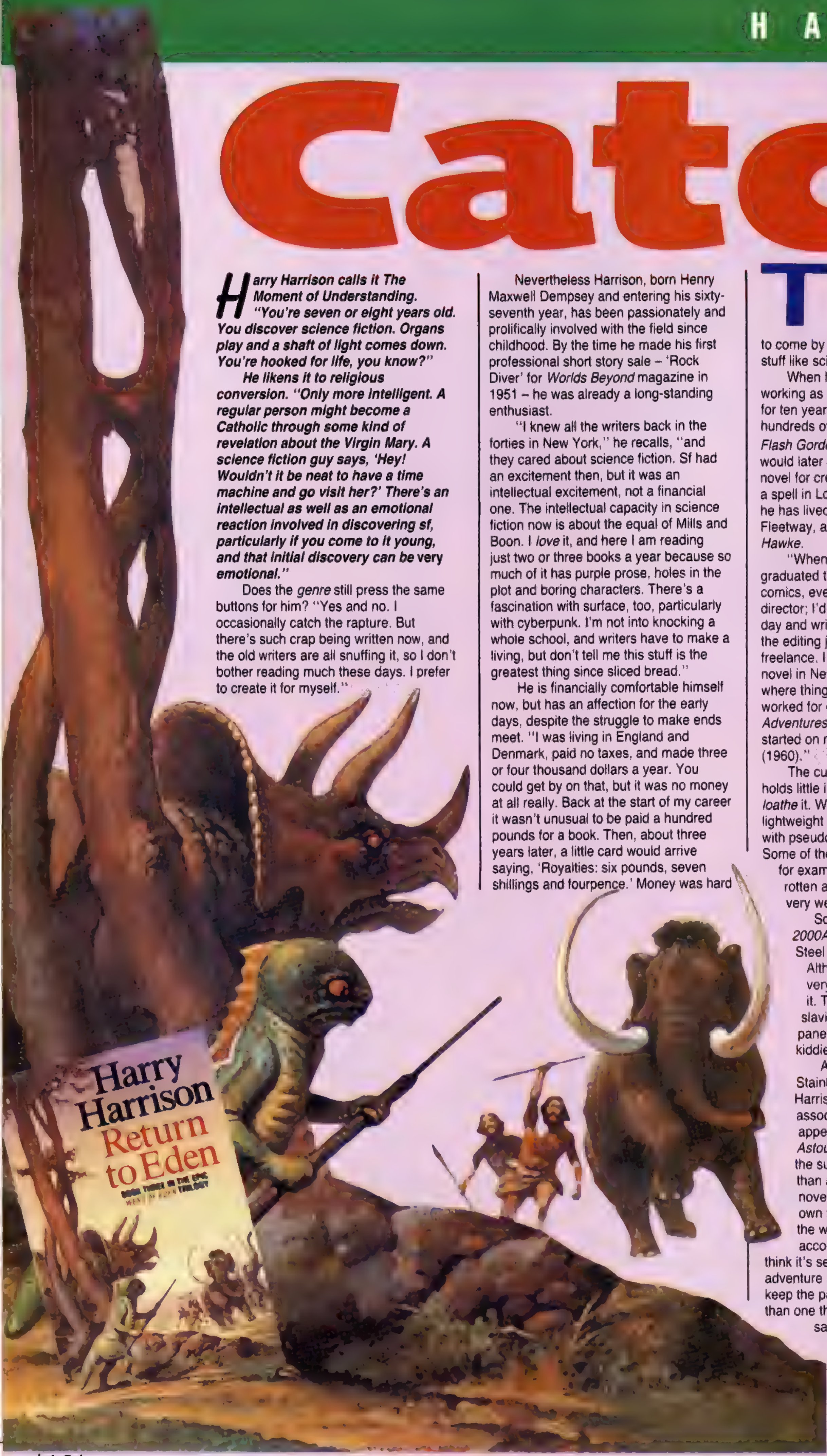
"When I went back to the States I graduated to publishing and editing comics, eventually ending up as an art director; I'd lay out magazines during the day and write at night. In 1957 I gave up the editing jobs and went totally freelance. I couldn't really get stuck into a novel in New York, so I moved to Mexico, where things were much cheaper. I worked for everything from *Men's Adventures* to *True Confessions*, and started on my first novel, *Deathworld* (1960)."

The current comics scene, however, holds little interest for him. "I hate it. I *loathe* it. When I did them they were lightweight things. Now they're plagued with pseudo-intellectual pretensions. Some of the continental artists, Moebius for example, I like. But – good art, rotten art – comics are never written very well."

So what did he think of *2000AD*'s treatment of his Stainless Steel Rat stories? "I loved *that*. Although, to be honest, I'm not very happy with the way they did it. They followed the books too slavishly and put in panels and panels of dialogue. It's *action* the kiddies want."

Anti-hero Jim DeGriz, the Stainless Steel Rat, is the creation Harrison is probably most closely associated with. The first SSR story appeared thirty-five years ago, in *Astounding Science Fiction*, and the subsequent books sell better than any of his other thirty plus novels. The character even has his own fan club, with chapters around the world. How does Harrison account for the Rat's popularity? " think it's several things. First, the adventure aspect. I put in plenty of action, keep the pace fast, and try to have more than one thing happening at the same time. They're a bit like the old pulp magazines in that way.

"Also, they're quite moral. Since the first book, no one's ever killed anybody, you notice that?


Harry Harrison
Return to Eden
BOOK THREE IN THE EPIC WEST OF EDEN TRILOGY

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ing RAPTURE

STAN NICHOLLS INTERVIEWS STAINLESS STEEL RAT CREATOR HARRY HARRISON

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My books are anti-violence. They're action novels, but they're not violent novels. I don't know if they're read *because* of that, but it's what I try to put into them. Then there's the humour, of course. If nothing else they're funny. I like to have a good, strong storyline, with plenty happening and no Heinlein lectures. There's nothing worse than boring the reader."

Writers can't afford to do that at the best of times. In a recession, with sales down and publishers cutting their lists, such errors can be fatal for aspiring authors. "If you're a young writer you'll have a hard job selling your first novel, harder say than three years ago; certainly harder than five or ten years ago. You're much better off if you're writing a category novel – detective, mystery, fantasy, science fiction – but once you get into a slot you'll be paid a lot less money and probably never break out of category. You may sell no more than a few thousand copies in paperback either. The shake-out has meant there are big-selling authors and there are non-selling authors. There's no middle-ground.

> "MONEY WAS HARD TO COME BY IF YOU INSISTED ON WRITING CRAZY STUFF LIKE SCIENCE FICTION . . ."

"As I say, if you're a new writer it's almost impossible to sell your book; but if you're already selling books, then they're on sale all the time. When I get a new title out they re-issue all the old ones. There's a drag-on sale. I've written thirty-seven novels now and at any given time most of them are in print. I think I've earnt that. I've laboured in the vineyards long enough, you know? I've got sufficient money coming in now that I can take two or three years on a book, not a book a year the way I used to, but I still work hard at it."

WHEN TOMORROW COMES

Recently, that hard work has been channelled into four books scheduled for release next year. Penguin will be publishing a novel with the working title *When Tomorrow Comes*. "It was inspired by the work of an old friend of mine, Professor Marvin Minsky, who has an artificial intelligence lab at MIT. He wrote a book called *Society of the Mind*, which contains the only theory of intelligence that works as far as I'm concerned. I wanted to use some of these ideas in fiction.

"Basically, it's a techno-thriller, which at the same time will tell you how your mind works. It's science fiction, but it's not going to be called science fiction because it's borderline. As a techno-thriller you cross over into mainstream sales. The cover will say something like 'A science techno-thriller', which is just marketing, of course."

Minsky's theory of intelligence is complex but Harrison has a crack at encapsulating it. "Put it this way: from small things grow bigger things. Obviously intelligence came out of un-intelligence. Let's say that at some point in the distant past an amoeba touched something hot and withdrew. That established a conditioned reflex. Reacting to the environment in certain ways imprints itself in the genes, so intelligence is passing on information, like a wolf teaching her cub to eat an animal is passing on information. How intelligence came to a plateau from that is what the book is about.

"It opens with a murder, and an artificial intelligence presented in the first chapter is stolen. The lead character finds himself in a fight for survival, and he has to rediscover the invention of this artificial intelligence, which he does. He reinvents it and uses it to track down the people who stole the first AI."

The second novel, from Century in April, is *The Hammer and the Cross*, written in collaboration with another well-known sf personality who, for legal reasons, has adopted a pseudonym. "I read an interview with Gore Vidal in which he said the greatest disaster to befall Western civilisation was Christianity," Harrison explains. "This gave me the idea for an alternate medieval world in which Christianity didn't get a foothold in England.

"I've done alternate world novels before, of course, and I wrote a short story with a similar theme called 'King Alfred Burns the Cakes'. Alternate worlds are very hard to do, and they can need a lot of research, but if they work they stay in print forever."

> ". . . AN ALTERNATE MEDIEVAL WORLD IN WHICH CHRISTIANITY DIDN'T GET A FOOTHOLD IN ENGLAND"

Stainless Steel Visions and *Galactic Visions* (February and October next, respectively, from legend) complete the quartet. Reprint collections built around Jim DeGriz, and Jason DinAlt from the *Deathworld* series, each contains one new story and are heavily illustrated.

The option for a Stainless Steel Rat film was sold eight years ago and has been renewed annually ever since. The only previous film based on a Harrison book, *Soylent Green* (1973), taken from *Make Room! Make Room!*, kind of missed the point, didn't it? "Well, no, not really. It got it inadvertently. All this crap about detectives and Soylent Green was nothing to do with it, but the message was that if we don't control the world's population we're going to be up the creek, and they got that. They made the background the foreground, and the background, that crappy world, *was* the story. It was a half good, half bad film, considering its biggest handicap was its screenplay. But it captured the idea of the book."

Why the delay with the Stainless Steel Rat movie? "It's fallen through several times because we want to make sure it's the right kind of product. That means some measure of control. I don't want to throw the books away and have bad films made out of them. The idea is to have the Rat replace James Bond in the hearts and minds of the public!"

Vader on Death Star SW33

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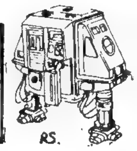

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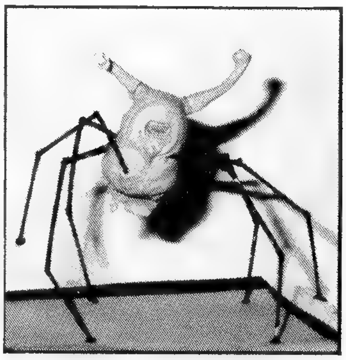

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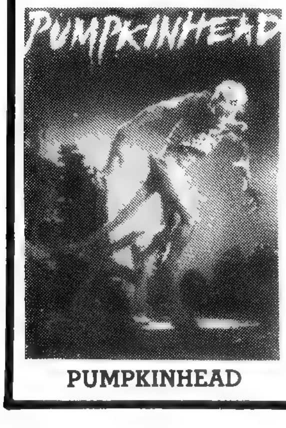

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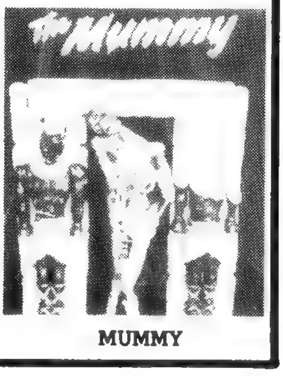

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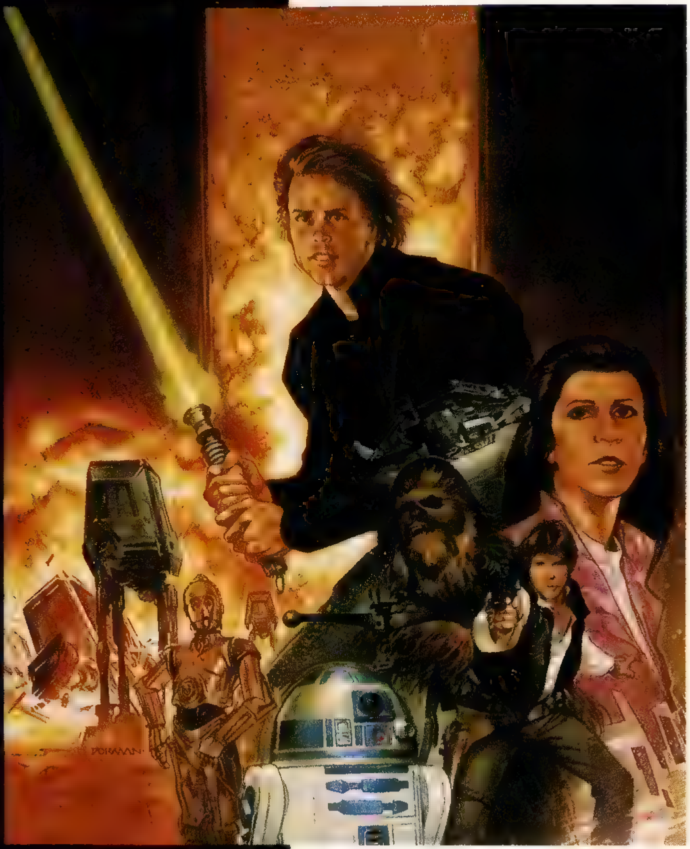

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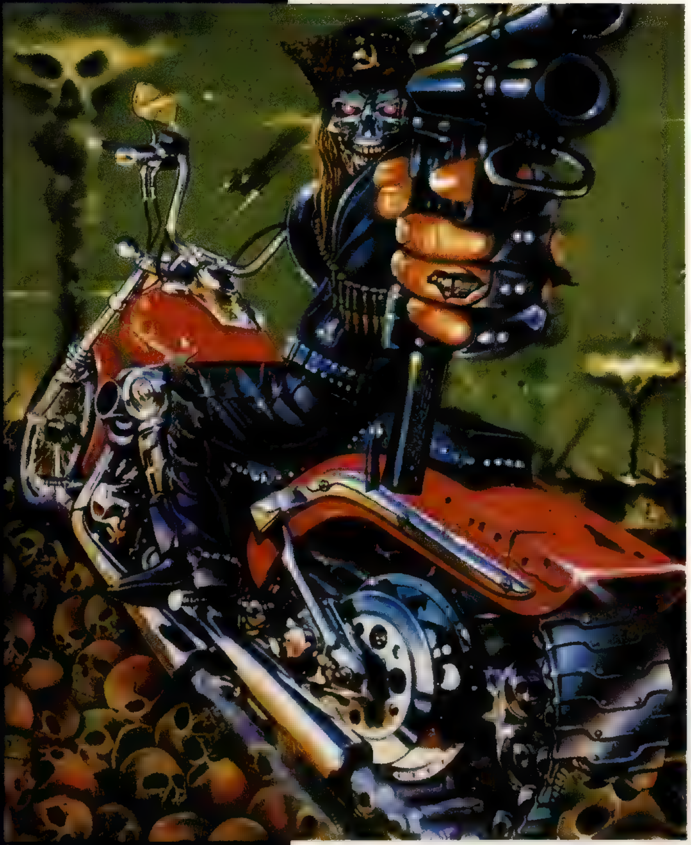

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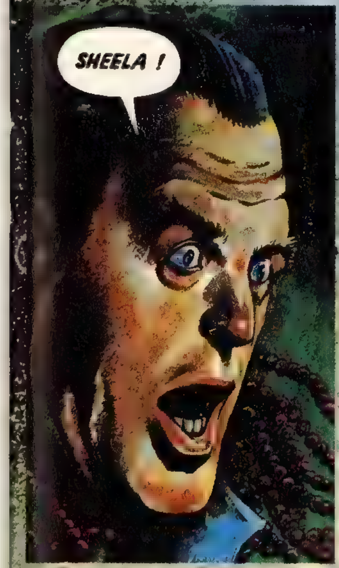
A LIGHT IN THE BLACK

JEFF ANDERSON & TERRY MURRAY TALK TO PAUL H. BIRCH ABOUT THEIR NEW GRAPHIC NOVEL, SHADOW'S EDGE



***If I were to tell you that a Christian book publisher had entered the graphic novel market, what would your reaction be? Yes, I thought so, mine too initially. But think about it: Maxwell C. Gaines biblical adaptations proved the founding block for Entertaining Comics; you've a reverend to thank for* The Eagle*; Chester Brown turned the gospels into engrossing reads; and there's Rob Walton's much neglected* Bloodlines *(we'll ignore the racist antics of Jack T. Chick's tracts!). Now Lion have something that might cause silver to leave your recession hit pockets, it's called* Shadow's Edge.**

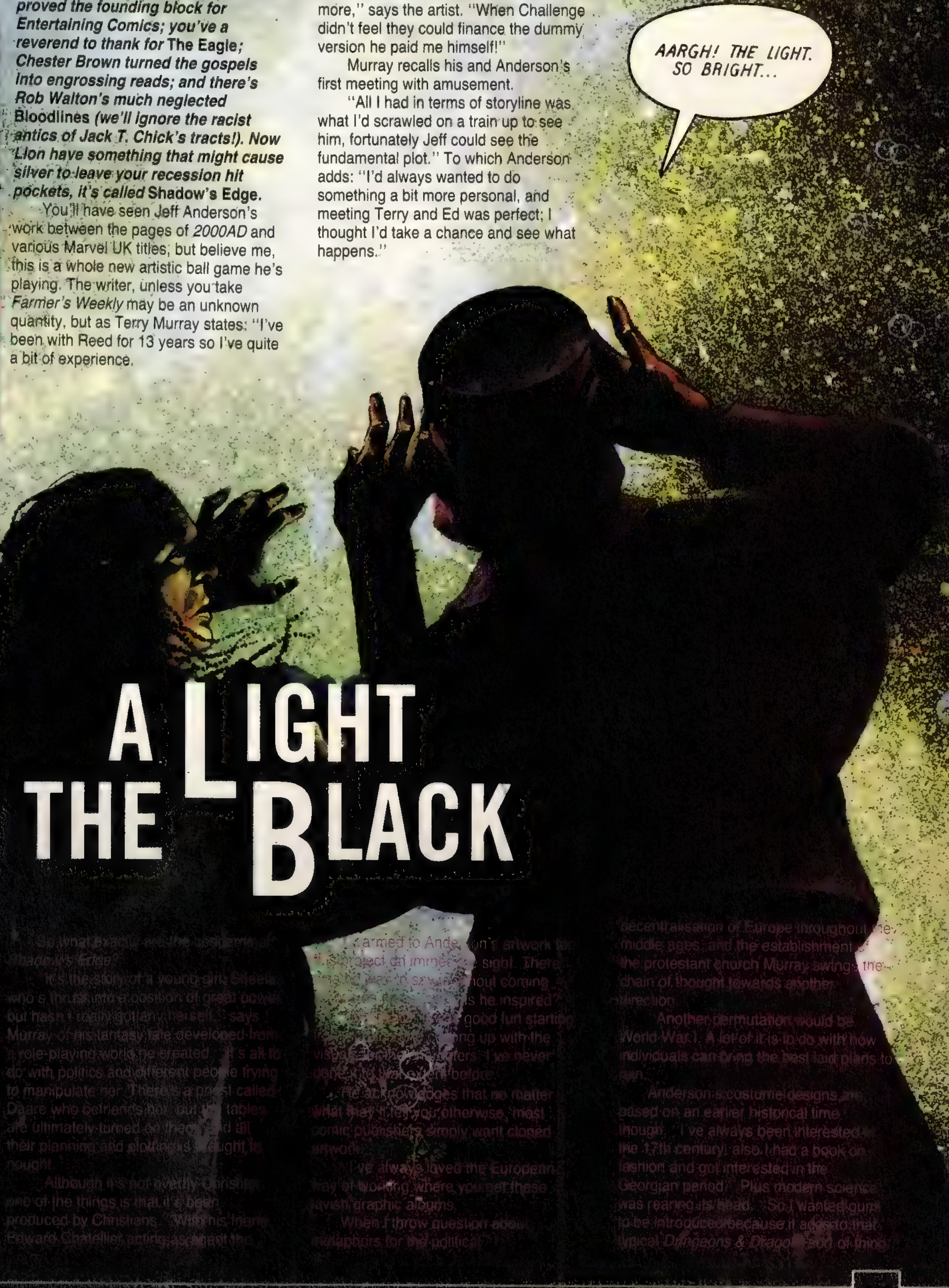
You'll have seen Jeff Anderson's work between the pages of *2000AD* and various Marvel UK titles, but believe me, this is a whole new artistic ball game he's playing. The writer, unless you take *Farmer's Weekly* may be an unknown quantity, but as Terry Murray states: "I've been with Reed for 13 years so I've quite a bit of experience. The motivation to put what was just an idea began its journey towards publication.

"We originally did it as a comic because Donald Banks at Challenge was interested. He put us in contact with Jeff.

"We couldn't have asked him to do more," says the artist. "When Challenge didn't feel they could finance the dummy version he paid me himself!"

Murray recalls his and Anderson's first meeting with amusement.

"All I had in terms of storyline was what I'd scrawled on a train up to see him, fortunately Jeff could see the fundamental plot." To which Anderson adds: "I'd always wanted to do something a bit more personal, and meeting Terry and Ed was perfect; I thought I'd take a chance and see what happens."


AARGH! THE LIGHT. SO BRIGHT...

So what exactly are the [illegible] of *Shadow's Edge*?

"It's the story of a young girl Sheela who's thrust into a position of great power but hasn't really got any herself," says Murray of his fantasy tale developed from a role-playing world he created. "It's all to do with politics and different people trying to manipulate her. There's a priest called Daare who befriends her, but the tables are ultimately turned on them and all their planning and plotting is brought to nought.

"Although it's not overtly Christian, one of the things is that it's been produced by Christians." With his friend Edward Chatellier acting as agent the

[illegible] warmed to Anderson's artwork for this project on immediate sight. "There [illegible] without coming [illegible] as he inspired [illegible] good fun starting [illegible] coming up with the visuals for the characters. I've never done it that way before."

He acknowledges that no matter what they tell you otherwise, most comic publishers simply want cloned artwork.

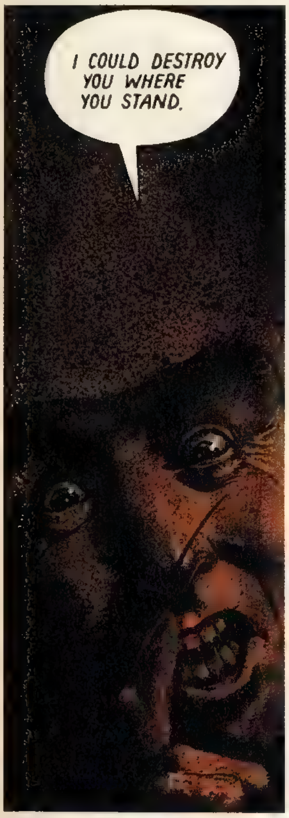
"I've always loved the European way of working where you get these lavish graphic albums."

When I throw question about metaphors for the political decentralisation of Europe throughout the middle ages, and the establishment of the protestant church Murray swings the chain of thought towards another direction.

"Another permutation would be World War 1. A lot of it is to do with how individuals can bring the best laid plans to ruin."

Anderson's costume designs are based on an earlier historical time though. "I've always been interested in the 17th century, also I had a book on fashion and got interested in the Georgian period." Plus modern science was rearing its head. "So I wanted guns to be introduced because it adds to that typical *Dungeons & Dragons* sort of thing.

Terry Murray and Jeff Anderson with pages from Book Two
Photo by Martin Ticney



I COULD DESTROY YOU WHERE YOU STAND.

. . which if somebody offers me work doing, I'll deny saying!'' Jeff laughs.

It's resulted in a radical change from the traditional fantasy look he started with, and yes there are elves in the story, but as Murray notes, ''It's treated like racism is in our world.''

Enter Madlin, a half-elf of more than cursory intrigue.

''Madlin's disliked completely!'' says Terry, ''because his mother was an elf and his father human; and due to his profession as a bounty hunter.

''In Book 2 there's more interaction with the elves and their particular problems will be revealed more. I wanted to create main characters that people could relate to. The thing about Madlin is that he's different, not that he's half-elf.

''In some ways things are a bit hackneyed, we've just twisted them round a little bit – but we like to think the way we've handled them comes across as fresh.

''Daare and Sheela are on the side of good, and there are others on the side of evil; Madlin who's ordinary, in that he hasn't an axe to grind, makes the difference. He's the character we think readers will relate most to.'' Once more I try to prise hidden allegories in the tale: was Sheela a prostitute before becoming queen of Berberus? ''Courtesan would be a nice description.'' Then she reminds me of Helen from certain gnostic teachings.

But such knowledge is denied.

> I INKED JUDGE ANDERSON AND THERE MAY HAVE BEEN A FEMALE TRANSFORMER – THAT'S WHAT'S BEEN SO GOOD WITH THIS . . .

''Anything that I thought about when writing isn't that important to me as much as making people think and look at things differently.'' How did they think readers, Christian and otherwise, would react to the first book?

''We're published by Lion who describe themselves as a publisher of books written by Christians, rather than publishers of Christian books. We've had good feedback from bookshops, both Christian and non-Christian,'' relates Murray. ''The idea is that you can read *Shadow's Edge* as a good fantasy, or, political story.''

''I think there's a great deal of misunderstanding on both sides, and in a way I don't want to make a big thing about it being Christian,'' says Anderson. Both feel that more extreme factions of Christianity could frown upon it. Might a significant degree of this be put down to generation gaps rather than secular divides?

''At my church a lot of young Christians are really enthusiastic about what they've seen. They're into the same comics as us like *2000AD*,'' continues Terry, while Jeff notes the greater British public continue in their ignorance of comic's maturation as a creative medium.

Book 2 is due Spring '93. I tell Murray my only major criticism of the first one had been the number of plot threads left hanging, which might confuse those unaccustomed to the European style of publishing this most reflects.

''The first one finishes at an unresolved point, with the second revealing things more clearly. If we do further books, I think we'd only be looking at two a year, and once people are aware that a book is due they should be a lot happier.'' He sees particular storylines concluding within two books, and probably no more than six. ''You need a definite end or it would destroy what we've got.''

''They had interesting conversations at the Bologne Book Festival,'' is all that's revealed thus far concerning foreign publishing, but Lion sell their rights in over 70 languages worldwide, so we're talking potential mega-big here. The company's been praised for its business dealings by the Society of Authors, even so editing something in the comic form has been a new experience for them.

''Jeff provided us with many of the things we needed to know. Although it's been a challenge it's helped us avoid some of the supposedly rigid ways about how you should do things.''

They worked in what could be described as an extension of the Marvel plotting system, but while over at the UK division Anderson could complete two pages a day, *Shadow's Edge* operated under completely different principles.

''I ended up doing a page a week, we had a month to go before deadline and I still had 15 to do. Quite a few were then done in a day getting up half-six and working until 9pm – I don't know if I'd be able to do that again!

''The pictures have to tell the story first and foremost, and hopefully that's what shows.''

His previous work hadn't allowed for much in the way of characterisation save grimacing faces, nor the depiction of women.

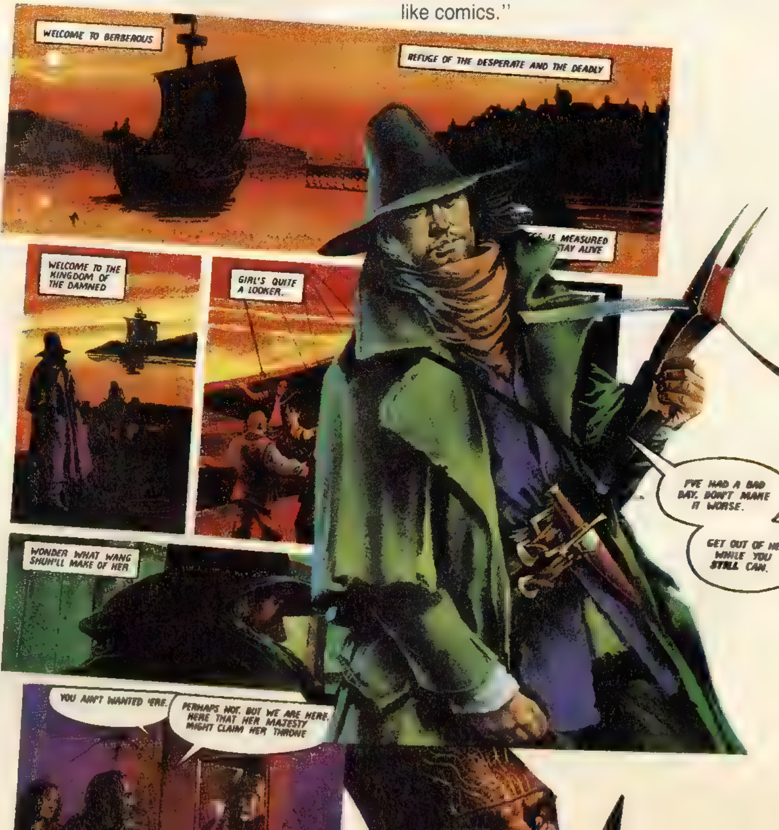
''I inked Judge Anderson and there may have been a female Transformer!'' he laughs. ''That's what's been so good with this – I've been allowed to do so much.

''In comics you tend to get categorised. I sent things to America a few times when I was doing *Transformers*, I could do other things, but I guess because editors are nervous about deadlines, they're worried about people who haven't done something like their books before.''

Shadow's Edge takes up much of the artist's time, and he's already illustrating Book 2, after which he says, ''I'll be touting for work.'' It'll cost publishers their top dollar prices if this book's anything to go by.

As for Murray, along with Edward Chatellier he's looking towards further creator owned projects, but says, ''Writing for Marvel or Fleetway would interest me if the right opportunity came up.''

This good vs bad as fantasy-thriller epic does have Christian understones, but if you're wary of the overbearing, and often hypocritical, or ill-researched doctrines that certain evangelists pontificate upon, you've not got that to concern yourself with from *Shadow's Edge*. ''We're really not regarding this as a heavy-messaged story,'' Murray emphasises. ''In some ways we're just proving that Christians can make a perfectly good graphic novel. That is itself is something that breaks down the stereotyped view of Christians, and hopefully some Christians will break down their stereotyped views and no longer be informed wrongly about things like comics.''



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YOU AIN'T WANTED 'ERE.
PERHAPS NOT. BUT WE ARE HERE. HERE THAT HER MAJESTY MIGHT CLAIM HER THRONE

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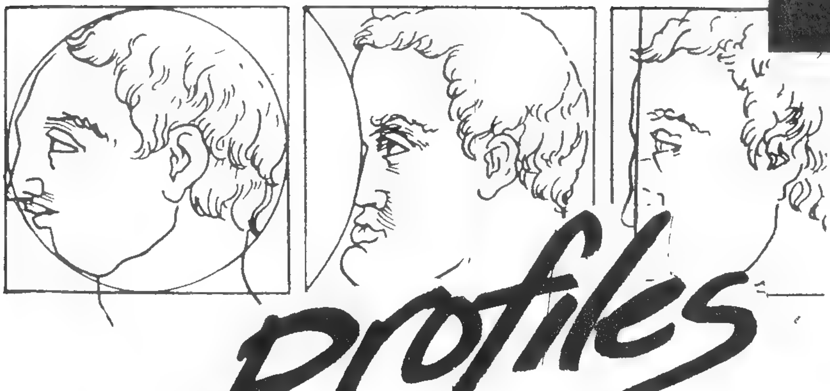


profiles

JOHN ROYLE

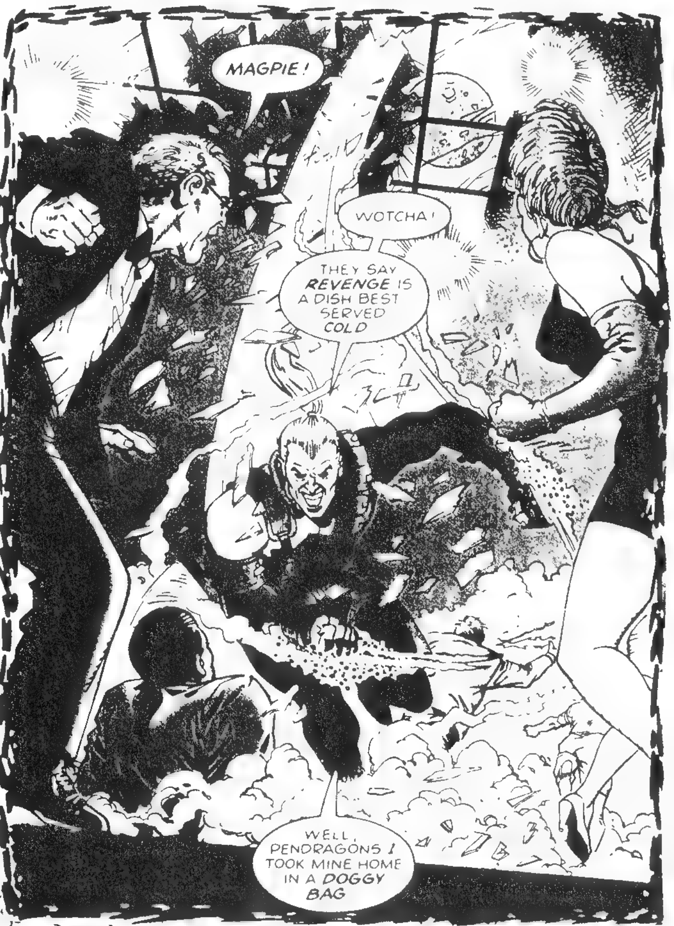
Although Marvel UK's reprints of their parents' superhero material have not found prolonged favour with British newsstand purchasers, there's no doubt the work within spurred a significant number of readers to become artists themselves; one such is John Royle, new artist on **Pendragon ii.**

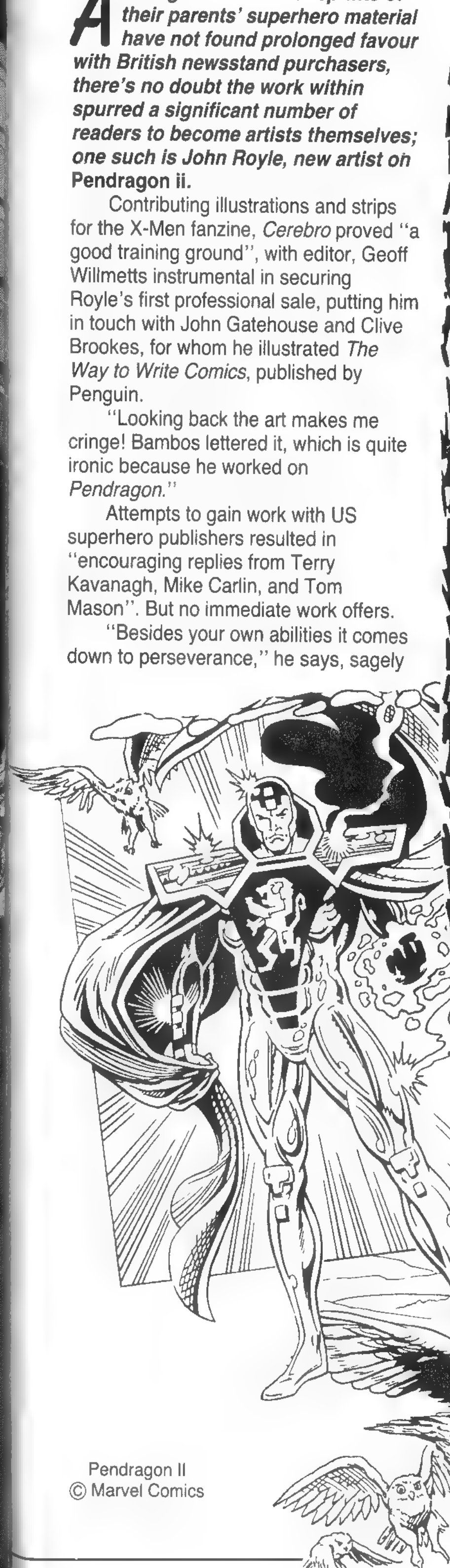
Contributing illustrations and strips for the X-Men fanzine, *Cerebro* proved "a good training ground", with editor, Geoff Willmetts instrumental in securing Royle's first professional sale, putting him in touch with John Gatehouse and Clive Brookes, for whom he illustrated *The Way to Write Comics*, published by Penguin.

"Looking back the art makes me cringe! Bambos lettered it, which is quite ironic because he worked on *Pendragon.*"

Attempts to gain work with US superhero publishers resulted in "encouraging replies from Terry Kavanagh, Mike Carlin, and Tom Mason". But no immediate work offers.

"Besides your own abilities it comes down to perseverance," he says, sagely adding, "and being in the right place at the right time".


MAGPIE!
WOTCHA!
THEY SAY *REVENGE* IS A DISH BEST SERVED COLD
WELL, PENDRAGONS *I* TOOK MINE HOME IN A *DOGGY BAG*



Pendragon II
© Marvel Comics

Work for magazines and a graphics agency (who due to lack of payment he had to sue) acted as a stop-gap between the time-worn rigmarole of showing portfolios at conventions.

"I'm quite shy with those I don't know and found it difficult. But you must push yourself to get known, and hopefully get good advice.

"Alan Davis was very encouraging, and I know how busy he is," Royle says of advice through correspondence with the artist. "He made me think about things I hadn't before like printing processes and colouring."

With help from friends Steve Yeowell and John Jackson (cartoonist for *Mr. Men*, etc) he devised five pages of Dredd visual continuity.

"It was an exercise in pure storytelling. I loosened up and moved away from the Byrne influence" (a style that had dominated his previous work).

At a convention writer/editor John Tomlinson recognised the artist's work having seen the Dredd story at *2000AD*'s offices.

"He'd put me up for something at *2000AD*, but Richard Burton (editor) felt I was too American for the comic."

Steve White was editor on *Knights of Pendragon*, when Gary Erskine was leaving he asked John to try out as replacement.

"It wasn't quite right though, he wanted a more European approach." Then the title went on hold.

"When they were launching *Overkill* I saw Phil Gascoine was drawing *Pendragon II.* I thought that was it – I give up!" Except, "I heard from John Jackson about London Editions needing artists for *Red Dwarf*, and editor, Mike Butcher asked me to send in samples.

"It was nice to get the work but at the same time I wasn't 100% into it, getting photo reference was a pain, and when you're trying to get a constant likeness it can get frustrating and tiring. I'd like to do another as I think I could do better, but I had to say no recently."

This was because Uther's boys needed a newly sharpened blade.

"John Tomlinson phoned saying they needed a fill-in on *Pendragon*, and could I do more samples to show Paul Neary, Stuart Bartlett the editor, and Dan Abnett." Hands up those wannabes still prepared to do this many samples? The work went down well, and with Phil Gascoine moving onto a new mini-series, the regular job was offered.

"I grew up with a feeling for the Marvel Universe and its characters. It's a company I've always wanted to work for.

"*Pendragon II* couldn't have been a better strip, I'd read and enjoyed it before, and it's the one out of *Overkill* I like best: I've enthusiasm for it and I like John and Dan's work.

"#5 stars Magpie as the villain, then from #6 guest-staring Spider-Man, it changes direction, with a four-part story. The costumes have been redesigned by Alan Davis – they're brilliant! Alan and Paul Neary will be doing the cover, and Martin Griffiths takes over as inker.

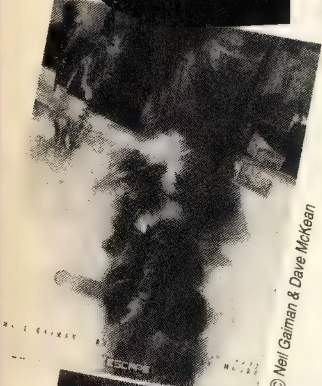
"One of the things that everyone wants to keep are the environmental aspects, and the idea is to have alien dimensions within Ley-space where different environmental catastrophes are at large with the Pendragons actually doing something about them." Thus using the events as metaphor for Earth's problems.

"Their powers will be defined more; all of the Pendragons have enhanced strength, reflexes and stamina, and are capable of sensing ecological pain, each other, and the Bane." A few individual examples being? "Albion's to be more magical; there's a synthetic warrior whose programming is taken over by the spirit of Gawain who's living proof that the Green Knight doesn't oppose technology if used properly; and a new character, Breeze – she appeared in earlier issues – she's fast and agile."

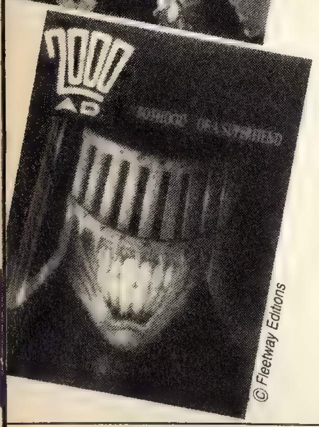
Royle isn't spewing hype for Marvel's benefit, he's genuinely ecstatic, "I'm especially thankful to John Tomlinson for remembering and getting me this big break." Buy him a drink then!

WHEN SOMEBODY SAYS TO YOU, "GRAPHIC NOVELS", WHAT'S YOUR REACTION? OVERPRICED, OVERSIZED AND OVER-INDULGENT? A RIDICULOUS ATTEMPT TO BREATHE LIFE AND RESPECTABILITY INTO THE SAME OLD JUVENILE NONSENSE? THE FUTURE OF THE COMICS MEDIUM?

Graphic Novels



© Neil Gaiman & Dave McKean



© Fleetway Editions

***Over the next few months, you're going to have plenty of opportunities to reassess your opinion. The publishers Penguin and Victor Gollancz are launching their second wave of graphic novels, while Lion Publishing, until now the publishers of fantasy novels, are taking their first modest step into the market with a single title. Mandarin Books, on the other hand are jumping in with both Judge-booted feet as they launch six titles, reprinting stories previously seen in* Judge Dredd – The Megazine *and* 2000AD*.**

The publicity drive for the launch of the Mandarin books is lavish and determined. Simultaneous signings are planned; London, Birmingham and Manchester are to be fly-posted; Dredd-sized dump-bins will appear in bookshops across the country. Mandarin publicist, Andrea Carr, talks in terms of expanding a previously under-exploited market. Fleetway's Igor Goldkind lays out wider plans for the establishment of graphic novels as a niche in the general publishing marketplace. Professional it certainly is, but what does it all mean for the books themselves? Is the term 'Graphic Novel' merely a convenient marketing hook upon which to hang what are, essentially, just Big Comics?

> *"THE PICTURE STORY, TO WHICH THE CRITICISM OF ART PAYS NO ATTENTION AND WHICH RARELY WORRIES THE LEARNED, HAS ALWAYS EXERCISED A GREAT APPEAL. MORE, INDEED, THAN LITERATURE ITSELF...WITH ITS DUEL ADVANTAGE OF GREATER CONCISENESS AND GREATER RELATIVE CLARITY, THE PICTURE STORY, ALL THINGS BEING EQUAL, SHOULD SQUEEZE OUT THE OTHER BECAUSE IT WOULD ADDRESS ITSELF WITH GREATER LIVELINESS TO A GREATER NUMBER OF MINDS"* ***Rodolphe Topffer, school-master and author of illustrated novels (1845)***

The assertion that, "If Charles Dickens was alive today, he would be writing comics," first appeared during the abortive "Adult Comics" boom of the mid-1980s. Since then, it has been mis-attributed to various of the comics illuminati of the time, Alan Moore more often than most. According to Igor Goldkind, Fleetway Editions' Head of Publicity and Marketing, he said it. Quite apart from who said what, and even from the specifics of the assertion, Dickens' experience as a popular writer during the last century does provide an interesting parallel to the emergence of the graphic novel as a publishing phenomenon.

Dickens' novels began life as serials, either published as partworks, under their own titles, or in magazines such as *Household Words*, which he also edited for a time. Their collection into volume form came later, after sales proved that a market existed for a more permanent edition. This was standard practice. It is a modern idea that the novel should jump from the writer, via the publisher, straight onto the bookshelves, which has more to do with improved printing technology and the preparation of the ground by the serial-to-collection process than with the general public suddenly realizing what a good idea it was.

However, if the above history lecture has any relevance to the graphic novel's chances of survival in the present day, why, over recent years, has the general public shown itself to be distinctly unimpressed with those graphic novels that briefly enjoyed shelf space in bookshops such as Dillons, Waterstones and W.H. Smith. Dillons' specialist comic section, 'White Light', has been extinguished – more of a spent match than a guiding beacon. Why?

According to Igor Goldkind, "The concept got diluted. Five or six years ago, the material was there – *Watchmen, Dark Knight*, the first part of *Maus*, the collections of *Love and Rockets* and *Swamp Thing*. There was this spate of material which qualified to be called 'graphic novels'. Then publishers saturated the market with anything they could put a spine on – 'The Collected Tarantula-Man', stuff like that.

"They tried to market these things as graphic novels, but they simply did not qualify. The consumers spotted this really quickly. Any non-comics reader who read an article about *Maus* in the national media and then walked into a bookshop looking for the Graphic Novel shelf was bombarded by all this other stuff.

"The reason for doing a second marketing of the graphic novel is to re-define and clarify what the graphic novel *is*. There's been a lot more thought about what they are and what the market needs."

What the market needs, according to Mandarin's Andrea Carr is "more accessible material in an accessible format." Of Mandarin's six titles – the Dredd stories *Democracy Now!* and *Raptaur, Young Death, ABC Warriors – Khronicles of Khaos, Killing Time* and the Dredd/Batman crossover, *Judgement of Gotham* – only the last on the list has not previously been accessible to readers of *2000AD* or *The Megazine*. Clearly, the hope is that the continuing rumours about a forthcoming Dredd movie will raise public awareness of the character still further.

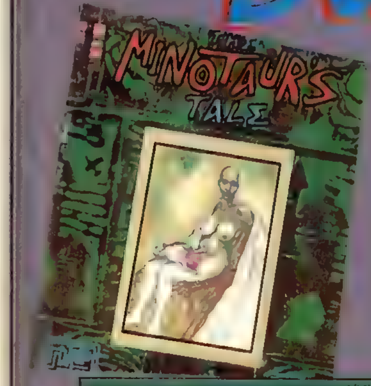
On the subject of the graphic novel's chances in the book market, Igor is of the opinion that, "if you want to establish the graphic novel as a niche in the market, the concept has to be sold. When you pick up a paper and look for a film you want to see, you don't find yourself confronted with adverts for westerns only. You see ads for all kinds of films. The idea should be to give the consumer the same variety of graphic novel material.

"Graphic novels like *Signal To Noise* (by Gaiman and McKean, published in July by Victor Gollancz) and *Skin* (by Milligan and McCarthy, published by Tundra in August), together with the Mandarin material, begin to give you that kind of variety. With a cohesive marketing

> "I DID KNOW AT THAT TIME [1988], BECAUSE WE'D JUST FINISHED BUILDING A CASE FOR *WATCHMEN*, THAT THE MEDIA WASN'T READY. THE MARKET HAD JUST ADJUSTED TO THE IDEA OF A LITERATE SUPERHERO GRAPHIC NOVEL. THEY WEREN'T READY TO BE BE HIT WITH SOMETHING FROM THE LEFT FIELD"
> ***Igor Goldkind on the relative failure of European graphic novels in the wake of* Dark Knight *and* Watchmen *(1989)***

KLINGKLANGKLATCI
WRITTEN BY
IAN McDONALD
ILLUSTRATED BY
DAVID LYTTLETI
A VG graphic novel
LONDON
DARK
2
BY
JAMES ROBINSON
& PAUL JOHNSON

but are they art?



strategy attached, the concept itself can be sold."

Lion Publishing's lone entry into the graphic novel market adds another element to the aforementioned "variety". 'Sword and Sorcery', or 'Heroic Fantasy' has been a minor player in the comics market, primarily through adaptations of Robert E. Howard's tales of Conan the Barbarian. With *The Shadow's Edge*, an original work by *2000AD* and IPC veterans Jeff Anderson and Terry Murray, Lion could be seen to be taking a bold step into sketchily-charted territory. Philip Henderson of Lion credits "the sheer quality of the work" with encouraging the company to take the risk. Maintaining the note of caution, Lion plans to publish a second volume by Anderson and Murray, *The Cutting Edge*, in February or March of '93.

Lion also has tentative plans to have the same team adapt the 'Celtic fantasy' novels of Stephen Lawhead (*Taliesin, Merlin, Arthur*, etc), should the market prove receptive to their original books. If the original books were to prove popular, wouldn't this be a step in the wrong direction?

There also seems to be another factor that should be considered before you lay any money on the success or failure of the graphic novel, this time around. The not-inconsiderable effect of having the popularity of one comic, *2000AD*, persist for fifteen years seems to have encouraged its readers to maintain their interest past the age at

> **"IT WOULD BE A DISASTER IF COMICS EVER BECAME RESPECTABLE!"**
> ***Mike Kustow, organiser of* AAAGH! A Celebration of Comics *(1972)***

BRINGING GRAPHIC NOVELS TO THE PUBLIC

"I'm quite convinced," says Paul Gravett, "that one of the essential ways of getting graphic novels out to people is going to be through libraries, because a lot of people just aren't going to be prepared to pay the money for a graphic novel unless it has really been hyped up."

Paul, administrator of the Cartoon Art Trust (CAT) and one-time editor of *Escape* magazine, has built up an international reputation as a champion of comics in all their forms. Apart from his work for the CAT, which includes the establishing of a permenant museum of cartoon art, his touring comic strip exhibition, Strip Search 2, has been approached by libraries throughout the country since its inception (see Collectors News for the latest on both of these).

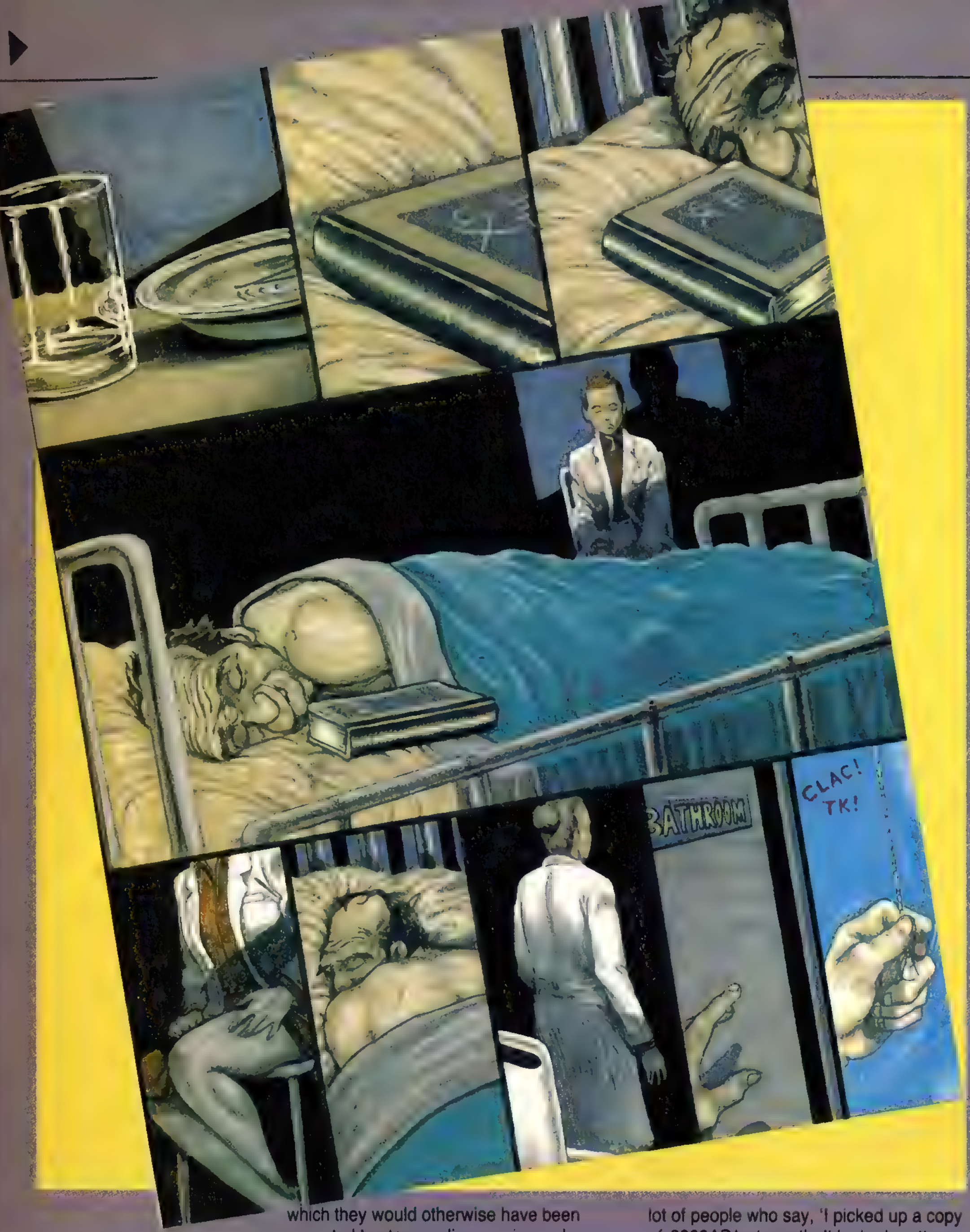
"There is definitely a momentum going with it. Apart from Strip Search, a lot of libraries are very interested in graphic novels because they're trying to attract young people, and they're aware that graphic novels are a way of doing that.

"There is a resistence to them, because of the usual librarian caution to things that aren't books, but I think it will develop on a big scale and that book publishers ought to be looking at libraries as a way of getting new readers in. It's a most efficient way of doing it.

"The Youth Libraries Group, which is part of the advisory board for libraries, are preparing a guide to the 100 recommended graphic novels that libraries might be able to use as their core starting stock. It probably won't happen until Spring of next year, but they're working on it at the moment. The point of the recommended list is to find material that shows as much diversity as possible. You pick out the very best of the widest selection."

Judgement on GOTHAM
2000AD
JUDGE DREDD

2000AD
KILLING TIME
2000AD



From Al Davidson's 'The Minotaur's Tale'

which they would otherwise have been expected to stop reading comics and go on to 'adult' things – *The Sun*, for instance.

Igor Koldkind again: "The Mandarin graphic novels are pitched at a slightly older readership. These days, I run into a lot of people who say, 'I picked up a copy of *2000AD* last month. It looked pretty good, but I can't be bothered to pick it up every week.' What they do is buy an issue, now and then, and, if they like a story, they think, 'Great! I can't wait until the collection comes out.' "

This factor also seems to have played a part in the steadily increasing coverage of comics in the general media, according to Igor: "Some of the people who began reading *2000AD* with the early issues are now working for the BBC or Channel Four, or are editing the *NME* or *The Face*. Just this month I've been approached by three different producers who want to do programmes on *2000AD* for the BBC. I asked them if they knew much about the comic and they went, 'Er, well, yeah. I've been reading it since Prog 1!'

"I think comics have, very quietly, become established in this country. I've been noticing little hints, a word here or there in a documentary, a passing reference to graphic novels on an arts programme. It's happening in America as well. A major American style magazine – it may have been *Esquire* – ran an eight-page comics feature on a particular subject – in this case, the US presidential election – the magazine's editor commissioned individual cartoonists to write and draw strips about it." (*The magazine is* Details, *published by Conde Nast*)

While political cartooning has a long and distinguished history of its own, the use of artists such as Gilbert Hernandez and Peter Bagge for this feature suggests that at least one member of the magazine's editorial staff has been reading the funnybooks.

It seems worth noting the fact that Penguin, Victor Gollancz, Mandarin and Lion are all book publishers who have chosen to branch into graphic novels, bringing with them the kind of contact with the bookselling trade that any publisher entering the field for the first time – from comics publishing, perhaps – would have to spend years cultivating. This, as much as anything else, might prove a decisive factor in a more general acceptance of the medium.

It is quite possible that all the marketing and publicity in the world will have less influence upon the growth or decline of the graphic novel as a commodity than the above kind of creeping, unconscious acceptance of the form as a valid means of communication. That success or failure cannot fail to have consequences for the development (or otherwise) of comics as an artform. CW

> *"WHAT'S OVERPRICED, ALREADY READ ALL OVER AND WALKS OUT OF THE SHOP WITHOUT LEGS? ACCORDING TO FLEETWAY'S SALES TEAM, IT'S THEIR GRAPHIC NOVELS – THE MOST PILFERED PRODUCT INSTORE"* **Dave Thorpe, following the cancellation of Macdonald's graphic novel line (1991)**

PAN BOOKS

Now a division of Pan Macmillan Ltd., Pan Books will be publishing The City *by leading horror writer James Herbert and Ian Miller in October. Next year will see the publication of the* Hitch Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy *in three volumes, a collaborative effort with Fleetway Editions, based on the novels of Douglas Adams and drawn by Steve Leialoha.*

HARPER COLLINS

Harper Collins will be launching an extensive line of graphic novels in January 1993 with their new Eclipse imprint, many titles produced in conjunction with Eclipse in the USA.

Titles for January will be The Yattering and Jack *by Clive Barker, adapted by Steve Niles and painted by John Bolton, together with the story 'How Spoilers Bleed', and* Dragonflight, *based on the novel by Anne McCaffrey published by Eclipse in 1991.*

February sees the release of Trapped *by horror writer Dean Koontz, which will appear around the same time in the USA.* Miracleman Book 4: The Golden Age *will be the first UK publication of the Neil Gaiman & Mark Buckingham story.*

Another Clive Barker title appears in March, Revelation, *which is backed up by the story 'Bable For Children'.*

April sees the first UK original title, previously announced by Macdonald before they cancelled their line of graphic novels. The first title will be Playing the Game *by Doris Lessing and artist Daniel Vallehy, previously seen on* Saviours *and 'Bible John' in* Crisis.

Dread, *yet another Clive Barker, appears in May, with a back-up tale entitled 'Down, Satan'.*

Dave McKean will paint the June title, Uh-Oh City, *written by Jonathan Carrol, which is followed in July by* The Life of Death *by Barker. Further titles will be announced.*

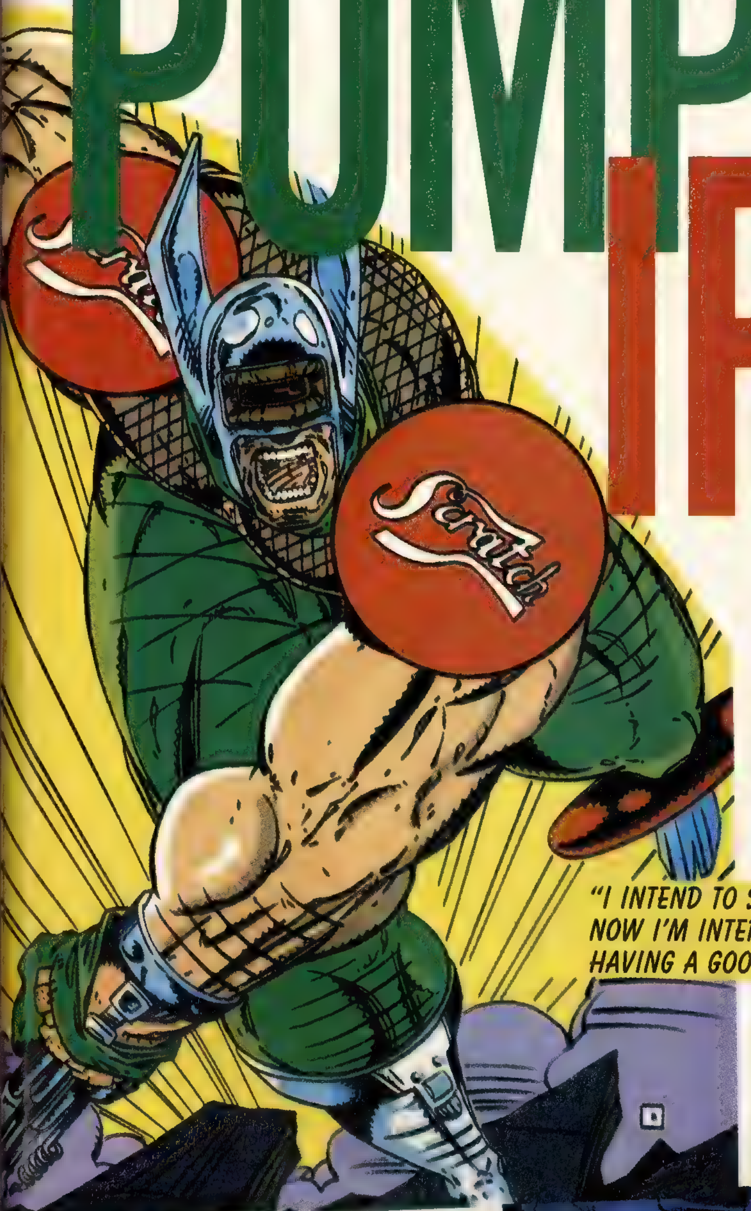
(continued page 69)

With thanks to Faith Brooker, Joy Chamberlain, Paul Gravett, Mark Hutchinson, Patrick Oliver, Sarah Smith, Simon Spanton. Sources of quotes: The Penguin Book of Comics, Fantasy Advertiser, Speakeasy, Comics International.

GRANT MORRISON SAVAGES THE INDUSTRY, CRITICS, THE PRESS, US, THEM AND, YES, EVEN YOU. PUT ON YOUR THICKEST SKIN AS MARTIN CONAGHAN ENTERS THE FAST-SET FISH-NET WORLD OF "THE JACKIE CHAN OF COMICS"

PUMPING IRONY

kid eternity



It had been more than six months since I last spoke with Grant Morrison, and as my taxi drew up outside his palatial Glasgow home, I must confess I was feeling a little uncomfortable, having heard a number of rumours about Grant's recent transformation into a musclebound, violent brute. Ringing the doorbell, I was greeted by a very tall Nordic man wearing only a leopardskin thong and a pair of wrestling boots; he scowled at me until a voice commanded him to bring me inside.

Two teenage girls in skimpy maids uniforms were hard at work with duster and Vax as I entered the dimly lit hallway and was ushered into Grant's study.

"I INTEND TO SELL OUT COMPLETELY. RIGHT NOW I'M INTERESTED IN TRAVELLING AND HAVING A GOOD TIME"

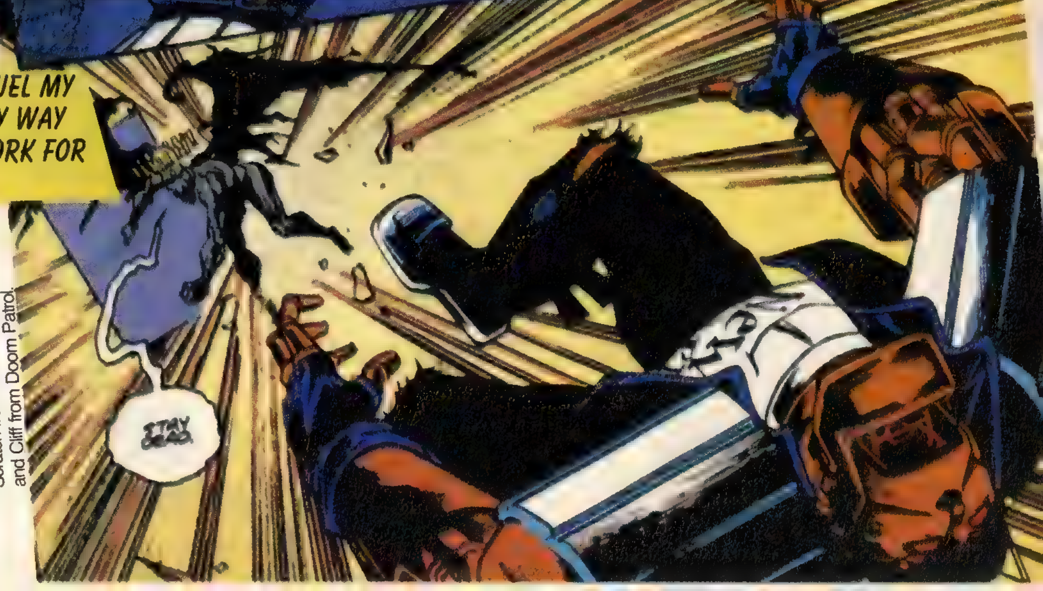
Grant Morrison was halfway through an elaborate Tae Kwon Do fighting pattern which ended in a bloodcurdling shriek of hatred as he punched the air. It was obvious that the whole thing had been staged for my benefit, but it was no less chilling for it's artifice. Grant slung a towel around his neck and motioned me towards a seat. With his shaven head, bulging muscles and lurid tattoos, he was instantly recognisable, the familiar, soft voice instantly reassuring.

"You can go now, Lars," he said. The Aryan giant grunted and left the room, I tried to make a joke, but it didn't quite come off.

"That's Lars," Grant explained "I got him and the girls from this agency. They come up once a week to do my cleaning and make my tea, Lars comes around whenever I need a bodyguard. It's all for show, but it impresses the punters."

I remarked upon his remodelled

"I REQUIRE VAST SUMS OF CASH TO FUEL MY EXTRAVAGANT LIFESTYLE AND THE ONLY WAY TO GET THAT KIND OF MONEY IS TO WORK FOR MARVEL"



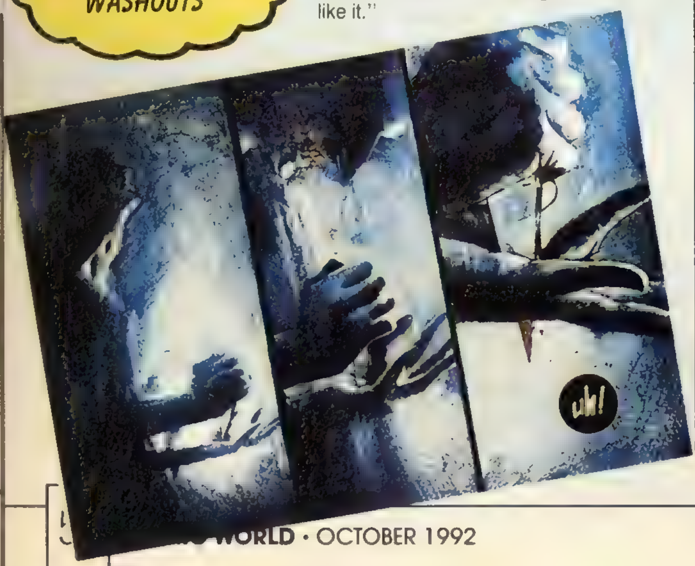
Scratch from Doom Force (above left) and Cliff from Doom Patrol.

Art © DC Comics except
Zenith © Fleetway Editions,
St Swithin's Day © Morrison/Grist

physique as he towelled the sweat away and pulled on a white Mod sweatshirt with R.A.F. target motif.

"Well, I'd already started the martial arts kick, but it was Mark Millar who turned me onto steroids. he's been practically living on them. When he suggested I try them, I was a bit wary: all that testosterone's supposed to make your hair fall out, but I solved that problem by giving myself an Aleister Crowley crop. The idea is that you use the pills along with exercise and you come out looking like Dolph Lundgren. Typically, Mark's overdoing it. Every day he's getting more and more like that mad bastard Nailz, from the World Wrestling Federation. Mark is one crazy gone mother though. I don't know if I can keep up with him, but it's an interesting experiment. Thing about steroids is, you find yourself walking around with a permanent stiffy – but the girls seem to like it."

"AS FAR AS I CAN MAKE OUT, COMIC CRITICS ARE JUST A BUNCH OF WASHOUTS"



He proudly shows me one of his many tattoos and I manage to force a weak smile. It depicts an agonised human head, pierced by a bayonet and surrounded by what looks like angry grass snakes. "It's not Prince Charles is it?" I ask, as the head does bear an uncanny resemblance to the heir apparent.

"Could be. Nobody's ever said that before. I had it done in Amsterdam, I was completely out of my head on christ-knows-what, and I ended up in the Red Light District in this disgusting room with tiled walls. it was like something out of *Eraserhead*, and this guy came at me with his needles and a face like Mother Theresa on downers."

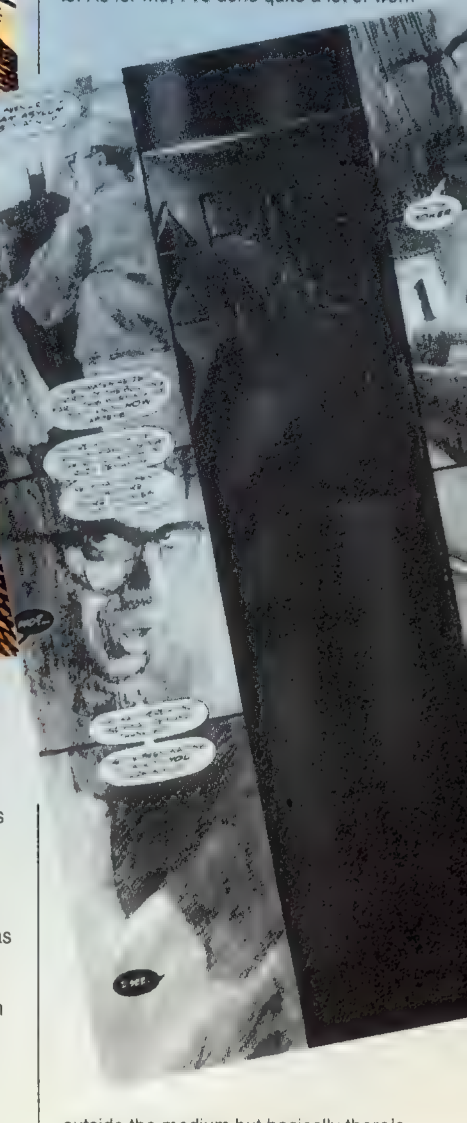
We're briefly interrupted by one of the maids, and not a moment too soon, who asks if I'd like some tea or coffee. I notice Grant's hand stroking the back of her leg and she giggles slightly. I ask for coffee, wondering how much of this is sheer pantomime.

After some chat, I settle down with my coffee and biscuits and guide the conversation around to comics, suggesting that Grant sketch a quick resumé of his career.

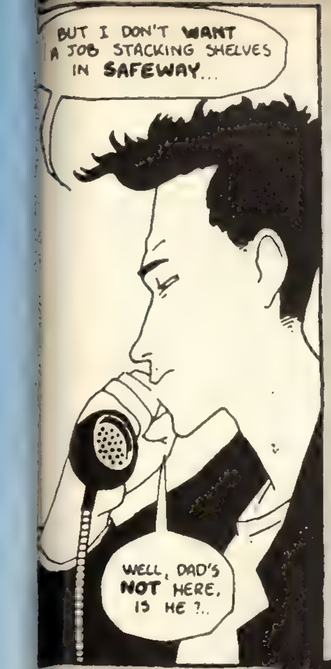
"I can't be bothered with all that. Everyone knows what I've done: D.C. Thomson, Marvel UK, 2000 AD, DC. It's too boring to have to go through it all again. Can't we talk about something else?"

I check my sheet of questions, and near the top of the list I find this gem – 'you've been writing comics for quite some time now, do you ever see yourself quitting comics for something else, as Alan Moore seems to have done?'

"Now wait a minute, Martin!" Grant snaps. "Are you really trying to suggest that Alan Moore's left comics? You are out of your tiny mind my son! *From Hell, Big Numbers, Lost Girls* – what do you call *them* if they're not comics? Alan Moore is the King of Comics and don't you forget it. Even when he writes short stories they're just comics without pictures. The man's committed to the comics medium and it's a good thing we've got a trailblazer like him to look up to. As for me, I've done quite a lot of work outside the medium but basically there's no cash in it. While there might be a certain degree of prestige and legitimacy in writing award-winning plays and short stories, they don't pay the bills, so, as far as I'm concerned, I'll stick with comics because I know which side my toast is buttered on."



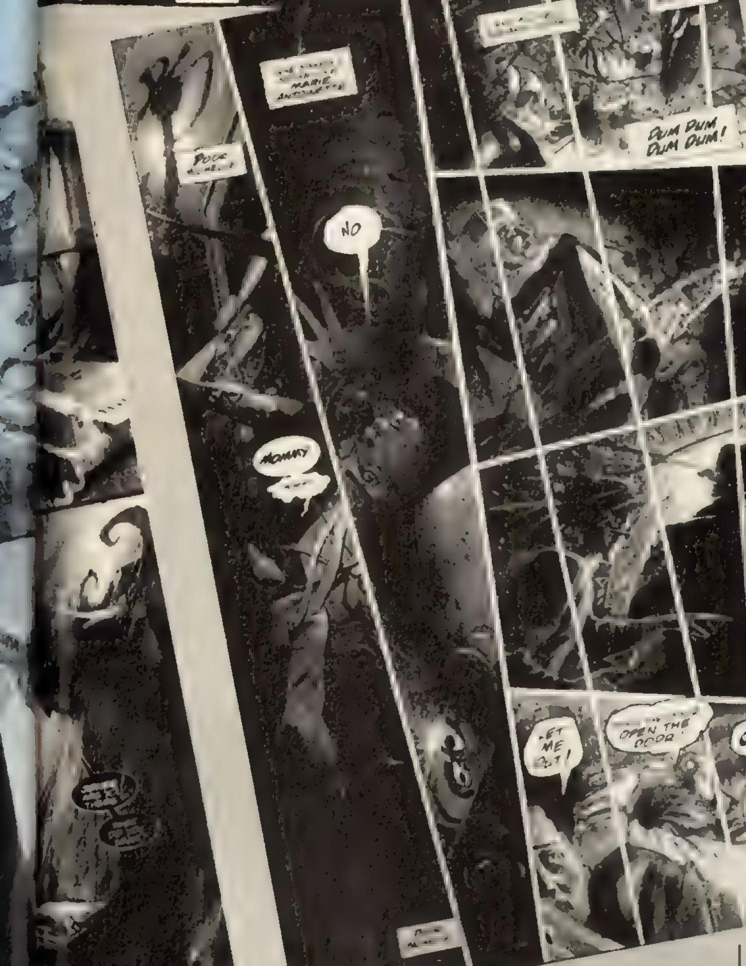
That pretty much takes care of my next question, but I decide to ask it anyway. I want to know what Grant would

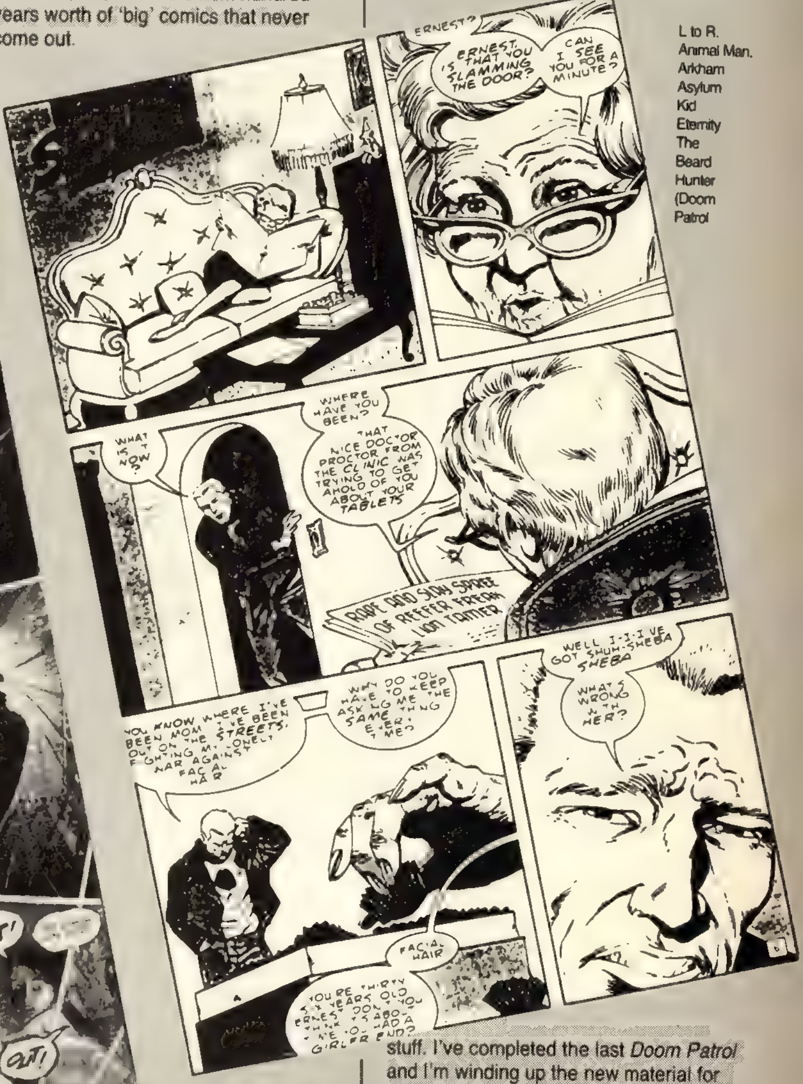

BUT I DON'T WANT A JOB STACKING SHELVES IN SAFEWAY...
WELL, DAD'S NOT HERE, IS HE ?..

do if he decided to leave comics for greener pastures.

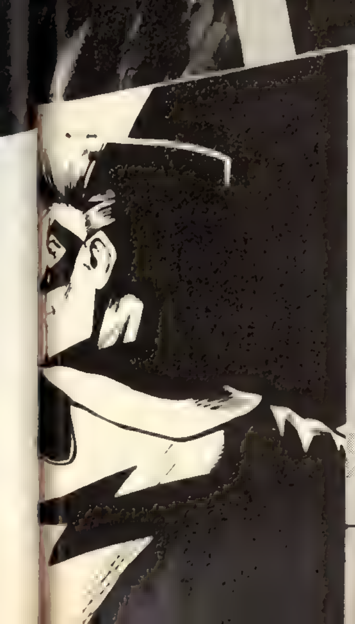
"I'd work for Safeway, probably," he says. "Basically, I don't want to work at all, and comics is just the place for someone with my kind of attitude. Look at someone like Rob Liefeld: he sits on his arse all day, churning out a few pages of barely literate, totally incompetent drivel – and he's raking in millions. Comics is a medium populated and consumed by morons. Why bother writing books like Anita Brooniker that will only sell half a dozen copies and get shortlisted for the Booker Prize, when you can knock out a piece of shameless toss like *Youngblood*, make a packet, and if you've got any sense just spend the rest of the time swanning around the world *actually living*?

"I love to work in the comics medium – I really do – and I've realised that a total contempt for the intelligence of the audience is the key to success. You know that *Doom Force* thing I did recently for D.C.? – the pisstake of *X-Force*, right? Well, eighty percent of the people who sent letters of comment in on the story actually took the thing *seriously*! They didn't see the joke! It's horrific. Tom Peyer phoned me up and read page after page of these insane letters. That was the turning point. That is the moment that I became a super-villain. So, I was one of the first to jump on board and now I'm the first to jump off the sinking ship of 'adult graphic novels'. Nobody wants to read them. The only comics that adults want to read are things like *Viz*. I've been trying to warn them for years, but my colleagues thought I was the cynical voice of doom – and now look at what's happened to the 'adult comic revolution' – *A Small Killing* for 50p in the bargain bin at W. H. Smith. No-one gives a toss. I hate the whole idea of massive, ponderous comics that never get finished anyway. Look at *St Swithin's Day*, or Brendan and Pete's *Skin* – we just get in there and say what we have to say in the minimum number of pages. It's not precious, it's not worthy, and it packs more of a punch and says more about life than the next hundred years worth of 'big' comics that never come out.


MARIE ANTOINETTE
DUM DUM DUM DUM!
NO
MOMMY
LET ME OUT!
OPEN THE DOOR
OUT!
OUT!


ERNEST?
ERNEST, IS THAT YOU SLAMMING THE DOOR?
CAN I SEE YOU FOR A MINUTE?
WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?
WHAT IS IT NOW?
THAT NICE DOCTOR PROCTOR FROM THE CLINIC WAS TRYING TO GET AHOLD OF YOU ABOUT YOUR TABLETS
YOU KNOW WHERE I'VE BEEN MOM. I'VE BEEN OUT ON THE STREETS, FIGHTING MY LONELY WAR AGAINST FACIAL HAIR
WHY DO YOU HAVE TO KEEP ASKING ME THE SAME THING EVERY TIME?
WELL I-I-I'VE GOT SHUM-SHEBA SHEBA
WHAT'S WRONG WITH HER?
FACIAL HAIR
YOU'RE THIRTY SIX YEARS OLD ERNEST. DON'T YOU THINK IT'S ABOUT TIME YOU HAD A GIRLFRIEND?

L to R. Animal Man, Arkham Asylum, Kid Eternity, The Beard Hunter (Doom Patrol



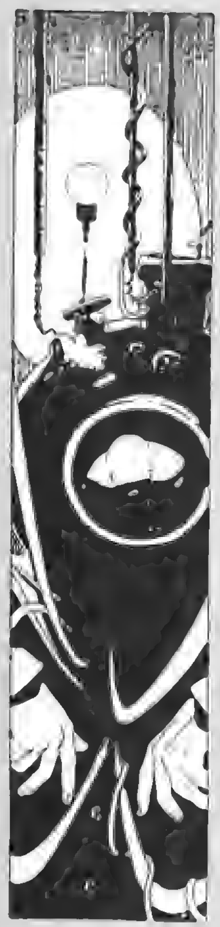
"Mind you, that won't stop *me* from doing the odd, unreadable *avant-garde* project for which I'm justly reviled. But in order to fund the kind of work that no-one but my small, cherished audience of true admirers wants to read, I intend to sell-out completely. Right now I'm interested in travelling and having a good time. I'm setting off around the world next month because it seems so much more important to dig life and get pissed and shag chicks and contract dysentery and soak up experience, than it is to sit worrying about your sales figures or whatever – and I'm also still the God of Rock and Cock, of course. I've finally got a really good new group going. After many wrangles, we've settled on the name ARTBOY, and I'm having a fine old time with that. So, yeah, comics are how I make money, but living's what I do. I can write by numbers and it'll still be better than most of the shite out there, and when I feel like writing good stuff, I'll do it. Otherwise, I'll be getting my ideas from wrestling and *Sonic The Hedgehog*."

With all that in mind, I ask him if he's happy with the work he's producing at the moment.

Of course I am! What are you trying to say, pal? From where I'm standing, it looks like I've produced one of the finest and most eclectic bodies of work of any other writer in this, or any other country. Right now, I'm just finishing off a lot of stuff. I've completed the last *Doom Patrol* and I'm winding up the new material for the big *2000AD* re-launch, so it's all water under the bridge."

'So', I ask, 'Can we look forward to seeing Grant Morrison back on *Animal Man* or perhaps some other regular D.C. title?'

"No, I don't think I'll do another long-running title for a long time. I've promised Tom Peyer I'll do six issues of *Animal Man*, though – to give Jamie Delano a breather and try to help people forget Tom Veitch's ambitious, but ultimately amateurish run on the title. I may do something inspired by my own experiences when I stayed with some friends on a Zuni Indian Pueblo near Santa Fe. One of the things I want to do is counteract all this patronising New Age Liberal bollocks which is being broadcast by the sort of people who use the unctious phrase 'native Americans' and have totally unfounded visions of hawk-nosed medicine-men and Castenada-



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style shamans – my mate Russell's a medicine man and there's nothing New Age about him at all. He's a hard bastard. He voted for George Bush, in fact, just to show how hard he really was. I hate that 'native Americans', you know? It just reeks of condecension. How can these people be 'native' to a colonial concept which was only invented in the 15th Century or whenever it was? The Indians I lived with refer to themselves as 'Indians' in English, and have perfectly good names for themselves in their own languages. So, I'd like to show something of the real life of Pueblo people and try to steer clear of romanticised Western notions about the whole savage with mystical powers – don't get me wrong; there'll be lots of fights as well. Other than that, I may do some work for DC on an S&M character called The Whip, but that's still in the planning stages."

Any plans, then, for something as commercial as *Arkham Asylum*?

"Well, *Arkham Asylum* was only commercial in the sense that it sold a lot of copies to people who had no idea what they were buying. Artistically, I think it was definitely uncommercial. Having said that, it was commercial enough for D.C. to want to release the *Easy Rider* version of *Arkham* in their *Shadow Of The Bat* title.

"I do have plans to do some highly commercial work. I require vast sums of cash to fuel my extravagant lifestyle and the only way to get that kind of money is to work for Marvel comics. So, I think you'll be seeing a couple of very big projects from me and The House of Ideas in 1993, including a Spider-Man story. I don't want to say too much about this stuff until nearer the time though."

We move on to a particular favourite of mine, Grant's highly successful Zenith series, which is just about finished it's five year epic in *2000AD*, and I ask him about the origins of the character.

"Zenith seems to belong to another life. I finished it ages ago. You can probably tell from the last story that I was struggling to make it interesting for myself. It taught me never to plan huge storylines aeons in advance. I think Zenith made it's point and then had the good grace to stop after that, unlike practically everything else in *2000AD*. It was a real 80s thing and should have ended in 1990, but I was too lazy to get it finished until '91 and it's only just come out as we speak."

As I said, Zenith is an all-time favourite character of mine, so I wonder what will happen to him when Phase IV reaches it's conclusion?

"That's the end, as I promised years ago when I started the whole thing. I won't be doing any more, Steve won't be doing any more and we've insisted that no-one else be allowed to do any more. It's finished and, although I'm fond of the characters, I can't say I'm sorry to wave them farewell."

So what, I venture, if some young turk pops up and wants to continue the Zenith saga?

"If anybody tries it, I'll kick their head right in – and that's a promise. I don't mind someone picking it up in, say, ten years time and taking the piss out of it, maybe doing Zenith as some kind of Fat Elvis figure, but for now, I want it to be allowed to disappear with what's left of its dignity."

Fair enough. I have another quick glance down my long list of questions and decide to try the one that runs along the lines of 'Do you think there are no new characters being created in comics these days, or is everyone just revamping old material?' I watch for a minute as Grant folds his hands – as though in prayer – contemplating my question. Somehow I get the strange feeling that I'm in for an outburst.

"It's not me who says there aren't any new characters. The people who keep saying things like that are the old guard writers on *2000AD*.

"I've created dozens of new characters and will continue to do so. Mark Millar, John Smith and I have come up with at least twenty brilliant new characters between us which will be coming up from Fleetway soon. It's the easiest thing in the world to do. The thing is, I can so easily do what the old boys can, but they could never – not in a million years – do the range of material I've done, God knows they're trying though. I remember John Wagner insisting that 'if it's not funny, it's not a comic!' and slagging off pretentious writers like *moi*. Now look at his stuff 'Button Man' with it's recurring motifs and *Watchmen*-style scene transitions and not one giggle in a hundred pages. I just have to laugh when I see badger's snouts turning into patterns on the side of fish as one scene melts into another. Who's pretentious now? They'll be turning up waving silk handkerchiefs at the D.C. party next.

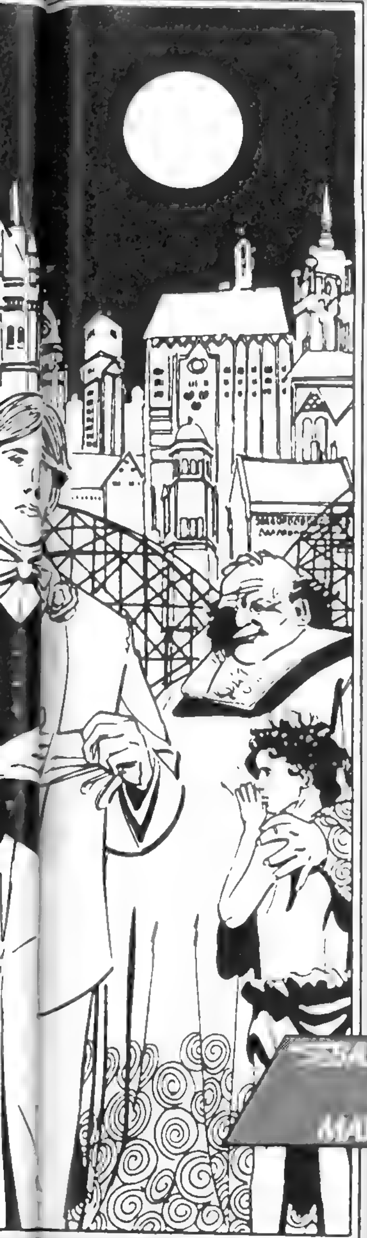
"IT'S NOT ME WHO SAYS THERE AREN'T ANY NEW CHARACTERS"

"And you just try finding a story or plot, or sense of drama in any of that stuff. The most basic elements of so-called 'craftsmanlike' writing are nowhere to be seen in the work of these self-proclaimed 'master storytellers'. Pat Mills is a mine of brilliant ideas and clever characters, but if he saw a plot coming down the street he'd call the Samaritans. Can anyone tell me what happened in the last episode of ABC Warriors? Does anybody care?

"I've been consistently and brutally pilloried by these people for doing weird and obtuse stories – and I can't deny that I have done these things – but it was through choice, and when I want to write a gripping plot I at least know how it's done. *Doom Patrol* was a deliberate attempt to break down the old story structures and play around with them, but the average level of intelligence among comic readers and critics is so woefully low that most of them totally missed the point. To prove this, I deliberately took out all the humour and used all the cliched and artificial storytelling devices in existence in the final *Doom Patrol* storyine. I knew they'd fall for it, and I was right. The reviews started coming in with 'Yes! Morrison's back on form! Learned the rules! Telling a proper storyline at last, none of that arty-farty nonsense etc, etc' – Pricks! They're so easily manipuated. It's like pigs at a trough. Give 'em exactly what they're familiar with, and they slurp it up every time. I'm looking forward to their pathetic attempts to criticise me now that I've got them sussed. I can honestly say that the work I'm most proud of is the stuff everyone hates."

I cough repeatedly and try to manouvre Grant onto another subject, but it's clear that he's on his hobby-horse and there is no dislodging him, so, I unwrap another Kit-Kat and start reading the spines of the books on the shelves around me while Grant gives the comic industry what for. I notice some rather unusual titles; *Kerouac And The Beats, DeSade – The Passionate Philosopher, The Psychedelic Experience, Mysticism And The New Physics, The Art of Gilbert & George, The Manson Murders . . .*

"I really have to say something about comic critics," Grant is saying. "They're a fart's length away from total illiteracy, they're pathetic physical specimens, they don't have a clue what they're talking about, and despite all this, they continue to adopt a ludicrously authoritative tone. *Comics International* is a case in point. They slagged off Pete Milligan's *Animal Man* issues and many of his early *Shade* stories, but now it has been decided that *Shade* is the finest comic in the universe and always has been since it's inception. That's not what they were saying last year. Brendan McCarthy's also came under fire, on the grounds that his work 'all looks the same' – 'koff! Brendan's comic work amounts to



▲ Sebastian O art by Steve Yeowell

DOOM PATROL

barely 200 or so pages in ten years. Why should that accusation be levelled against him of all people, rather than John Byrne or George Perez or Howard Chaykin – or anyone else for that matter? – especially when his work doesn't 'all look the same', from where I'm sitting anyway. As far as I can make out, comic critics are just a bunch of washouts trying to exercise the final shreds of what seems like power in their tiny worlds. The failing effort of the hobby element in comics to raise it's reedy voice in praise of sameness, tedium and 'solid', 'craftsmanlike' work.

"I really do think the battle lines have been drawn. I want to see comics as a pop medium, I want to see the Forbidden Planet empire reaching out to every city in the world, like McDonald's. I want to see comic creators and retailers in *Vogue* and on telly, but ranged against that brilliant global vision are the cornershop bankers who just want to sneak home with their brown paper bags and their Betty Page videos, and who're just desperate to keep comics at the level of stamp collecting and train spotting because they can't face up to the glare of the real world. Which side will you be on? – it's as simply as that."

Grant stares at me viciously, and I'm glad when Lars arrives – just in the nick of time – with a bottle of Bollinger, which he defty opens (Lars' top tip for opening champagne bottles without spraying champagne all over the room – turn the bottle, not the cork!) One of the maids puts a Noel Coward CD into the machine and the dulcet tones of 'Every Little Fish' seem to relax Grant. The other maid sits on his knee and they sip champagne from the same glass.

"SEBASTIAN O . . . THREE ISSUES OF NO-NONSENSE MAYHEM AND DANDYISM."

'Thirty quid a day for the pair of them," Grant grins. "Another fifteen for Lars. Live large Martin. It's the only way."

It seems to be an appropriate moment to ask about *Sebastian O*. Written by Grant, drawn by long-time collaborator, Steve Yeowell, and soon to be released on D.C.'s new Vertigo imprint. (They'll also be publishing *The Mystery Play*, an 80 page psychothriller, written by Grant and painted by Jon. J. Muth.)

"*Sebastian O*? Well, it's three issues of no-nonsense mayhem and dandyism. The whole thing came about because I'd planned a revamp of Fleetway's Janus Stark for the *Action Special* thing that came out recently. I took the Victorian elements of Janus Stark and remixed them as a kind of Steampunk thing. I decided to rework Stark himself as a decadent hero, a dissipated Wildean figure, and by the time I'd finished, I realised I could just change the name to *Sebastian O* and sell it to Art Young. I like it a lot. It's fast and it's hip and it's totally throwaway, like a Victorian *manga*. Steve is doing his best work todate. He's coming home at four o'clock in the morning from illegal Raves – out of his face on E and Special K, and then sitting down to draw this gorgeous Beardsleyesque malarky. It's a smart one in the cobblers to the dickheads who've been taking his work for granted."

Sounds alright to me – but then again, by the time the second bottle of champagne began to flow, everything began to sound alright to me. Pleasant summer sunlight slanted through the big picture windows as we relaxed in the remarkably capable hands of the girls. Once or twice, Lars answered the phone with curt, arrogant tones, but otherwise, the mood was one of dreamy hedonism. I asked Grant if he had any last words for *Comic World* readers.

"Only this," he said, raising a glass. "Advice from my dad, who's the coolest guru I know: Whatever you do, make sure you go right to the top, because you sure as hell can't piss *upwards* on people."

And with a cruel laugh, he threw me out. CW

GRANT MORRISON STRIPOGRAPHY

- **Time is a Four-Lettered Word** (in *Near Myths 2*, Oct 1978, art by GM)
- **Gideon Stargrave** (in *Near Myths 3-4*, Dec 1978-Sep 1979, art by GM)
- **Captain Clyde** (newspaper strip, Goven Press/ Renfrew Press/Clydebank Press, 150 episodes, 1 Nov 1979-5 Nov 1981, art by GM)
- **Algol the Terrible**:
  - Algol the Terrible (in *Starblazer 15*, Dec 1979, art by GM)
  - The Cosmic Outlaw (in *Starblazer 86*, Dec 1982, art by Jamie Ortiz)
- **The Checkmate Man** (in *Near Myths 5*, Apr 1980, art by GM)
- **Last Man on Earth** (in *Starblazer 28*, Jul 1980, art by Keith Robson)
- **Mikal Kayn**:
  - Operation Overkill (in *Starblazer 45*, Mar 1981, art by Alcatena)
  - The Death Reaper (in *Starblazer 127*, Aug 1984, art by Alcatena)
  - Mind Bender (in *Starblazer 167*, Apr 1986, art by Alcatena)
  - The Midas Mystery (in *Starblazer 177*, Sep 1986, art by Alcatena)
- **The Liberators**: Night Moves (in *Warrior 26ß*, Feb 1985, art by John Ridgway)
- **The Stalking** (text story, in *Batman Annual 1986*)
- **Osgood Peabody's Big Green Dream Machine** (text story, in *Superman Annual 1986*)
- **Captain Granbretan** (text story, in *Captain Britain 13*, Dec 1985)
- **Tharg's Future Shocks**:
  - Hotel Harry Felix (in *2000AD 463*, 29 Mar 1986, art by Geoff Senior)
  - The Alteration (in *2000AD 466*, 19 Apr 1986, art by Alan Langford)
  - Alien Aid (in *2000AD 469*, 10 May 1986, art by John Stokes)
  - 2000BC (by The Mighty One, in *2000AD 473*, 7 Jun 1986, art by Eric Bradbury)
  - Some People *Never* Listen! (in *2000AD 475*, 21 Jun 1986, art by Barry Kitson)
  - The Shop That Sold Everything! (in *2000AD 477*, 5 Jul 1986, art by John Stokes)
  - Danger! Genius At Work (in *2000AD 479*, 19 Jul 1986, art by Steve Dillon)
  - Wheels of Fury! (in *2000AD 481*, 2 Aug 1986, art by Geoff Senior)
  - Curse Your Lucky Star! (in *2000AD 482*, 9 Aug 1986, art by Barry Kitson)
  - Return to Sender (in *2000AD Annual 1987*, 1986, art by Jeff Anderson)
  - Candy and the Catchman (in *2000AD 491*, 11 Oct 1986, art by John Ridgway)
  - Fair Exchange (in *2000AD 514*, 21 Mar 1987, art by Colin Macneil)
  - The Invisible Etchings of Salvador Dali (in *2000AD 515*, 28 Mar 1987, art by John Hicklenton)
  - Big Trouble for Blast Barclay (in *2000AD 516*, 4 Apr 1987, art by Mike White)
- **Zoids**:
  - Old Soldiers Never Die (in *Spiderman and Zoids 19*, 12 Jul 1986, art by Geoff Senior
  - Deserts (in *Spiderman & Zoids 30-31*, 27 Sep-4 Oct 1986, art by Ron Smith 30, Geoff Senior 31)
  - Bits and Pieces (in *Spiderman & Zoids 36-37*, 8 Nov-15 Nov 1986, art by John Ridgway)
  - The Black Zoid (in *Spiderman & Zoids 40-49*, 6 Dec 1986-7 Feb 1987, art by Kev Hopgood 40, Kev Hopgoood/David Hine 41-42, Steve Yeowell/David Hine 43-49)
- **Dr Who**:
  - Changes (in *Dr Who Monthly 118-119*, Nov-Dec 1986, art by John Ridgway)
  - The World Shapers (in *Dr Who Monthly 127-129*, Aug-Oct 1987, art by John Ridgway/Tim Perkins)
  - Culture Shock (in *Dr Who Monthly 139*, Aug 1988, art by Bryan Hitch)
- **Ulysses Sweet**:
  - Maniac For Hire (in *2000AD 507*, 31 Jan 1987, art by J.Kube)
  - Fruitcake And Veg (in *2000AD 508-509*, 7 Feb-14 Feb 1987, art by Colin Macneil)
- **Abraxas** (in *Sunrise 1-2*, Feb-May 1987, art by Tony O'Donnell)
- **Master of Kung Fu**: Meditations in Red (in *Action Force 17*, 27 Jun 1987, art by Steve Yeowell)
- **Zenith**:
  - Phase One (in *2000AD 535-550*, 15 Aug-28 Nov 1987, art by Steve Yeowell)
  - Interlude 1,2 (in *2000AD 558-559*, 23 Jan-30 Jan 1988, art by Steve Yeowell)
  - Phase Two (in *2000AD 589-606*, 27 Aug-24 Dec 1988, art by Steve Yeowell)
  - Phase Three (in *2000AD 626-634,650-662,667-670*, 13 May-8 Jul 1989, 28 Oct 1989-20, Jan 1990, 24 Feb-17 Mar 1990, art by Steve Yeowell)
  - Interlude 3: Maximan (in *2000AD Winter Special 1*, Nov 1989, art by M. Carmona)
  - Interlude 4: Shadows & Relections (in *2000AD Annual 1990*, 1989, by Jim McCarthy)
  - Phase Four (in *2000AD 791-now*, 11 Jul 1992-present, art by Steve Yeowell)
- **The Ring of Gofannon** (in *Starblazer 209*, Jan 1988, art by Garijo)
- **Venus Blue Genes**: The Pleasures of the Flesh (in *2000AD Sci-Fi Special*, May 1988, art by Will Simpson)
- **Born Again Punk** (in *Heartbreak Hotel 4*, Jul/Aug 1988, art by GM)
- **Action Force**: Old Scores (in *Action Force Monthly 3*, Aug 1988, art by Mark Farmer)
- **Animal Man**:
  - (in *Animal Man 1-26*, Sep 1988-Aug 1990, art by Chas Truog/Doug Hazlewood 1-8,10-13,15-21,23-24, Tom Grummett/Hazlewood 9,14, Paris Cullins/Steve Montano 22, Truog/Mark Farmer 25-26)
  - The Myth of Creation (in *Secret Origins 39*, Apr 1989, art by Tom Grummett/Doug Hazlewood)
- **Doom Patrol** (in *Doom Patrol 19-now*, Feb 1989-present, art by Richard Case/Carlos Garzon 19, Case/Scott Hanna 20-24,48, Doug Braithwaite/Hanna 25, Case/John Nyberg 26-35, Kelley Jones/Mark McKenna 36, Case/McKenna 37-38,40,44,46-47, Case/McKenna/Demulder 39,41, Mike Drigenberg/Doug Hazlewood 42, Steve Yeowell 43, Vince Giarrano/Malcolm Jones 45, Case/Mark Badger 49, Case/Jamie Hewlett/Rian Hughes 50, Case/Stan Woch 51,54-56,59-62, Case/Philip Bond 52, Ken Steacy 53, Case/Woch/McKenna 57, Sean Phillips 58)
- **The Further Adventures of Hitler** (in *Cut*, Jul-Sep 1989, art by Steve Yeowell, story incomplete; in *Crisis 46-49*, 9 Jun-21 Jul 1990)
- **St Swithins Day** (in *Trident 1-4*, Aug 1989-Feb 1990, art by Paul Grist; reprinted in *St Swithins Day*, Apr 1990, newly coloured by Steve Whitaker)
- **Batman**:
  - Arkham Asylum: A Serious House on Serious Earth (graphic novel, DC, Nov 1989, art by Dave McKean)
  - Gothic: A Romance (in *Legends of the Dark Knight 6-10*, Apr-Aug 1990, art by Klaus Janson)
- **Justice League of America**: Ghosts of Stone (in *Secret Origins 46*, Dec 1989, art by Curt Swan/George Freeman)
- **John Constantine** (in *Hellblazer 25-26*, Jan-Feb 1990, art by David Lloyd)
- **The House of Hearts Desire** (in *A1 #3*, Mar 1990, art by Dom Regan)
- **Dare** (in *Revolver 1-7*, Jul 1990-Jan 1991, *Crisis 55-56*, Feb-Mar 1991, art by Rian Hughes)
- **Steed and Mrs Peel** (in *Steed & Mrs Peel 1-3*, Dec 1990-Jun 1991, art by Ian Gibson)
- **Bible John – A Forensic Meditation** (in *Crisis 56-61*, Mar-Aug 1991, art by Daniel Vallely)
- **Kid Eternity** (in *Kid Eternity 1-3*, Apr-Nov 1991, art by Duncan Fegrado)
- **Doom Force** (in *Doom Force 1*, Jul 1992, art by Steve Pugh, Ian Montgomery/Brad Vancata, Richard Case/Walter Simonson, Paris Cullins/Ray Kryssing, Duke Mighton/Mark McKenna, Ken Steacy)
- **A Glass of Water** (in *Fast Forward 1*, Oct 1992, art by Dave McKean)

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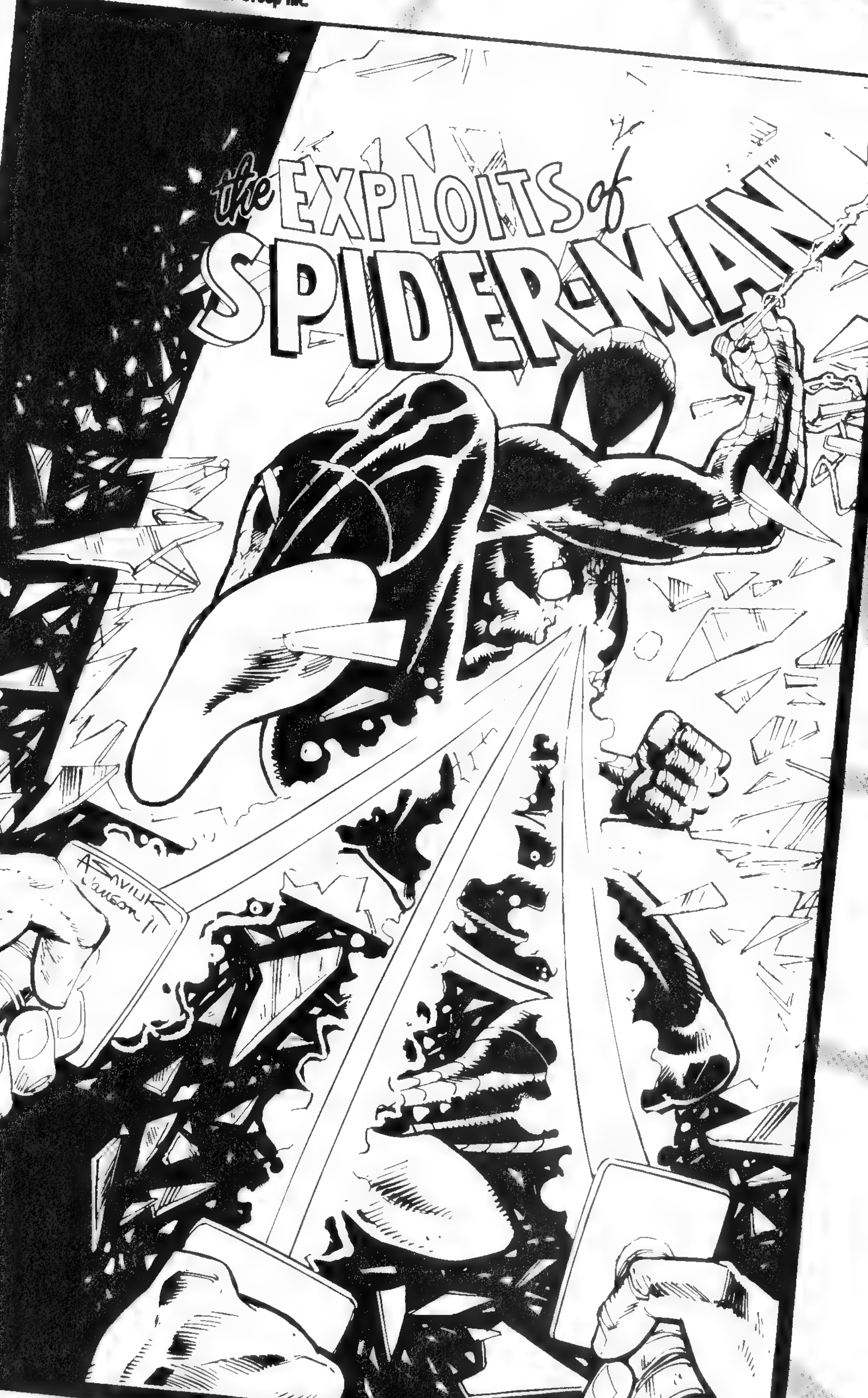
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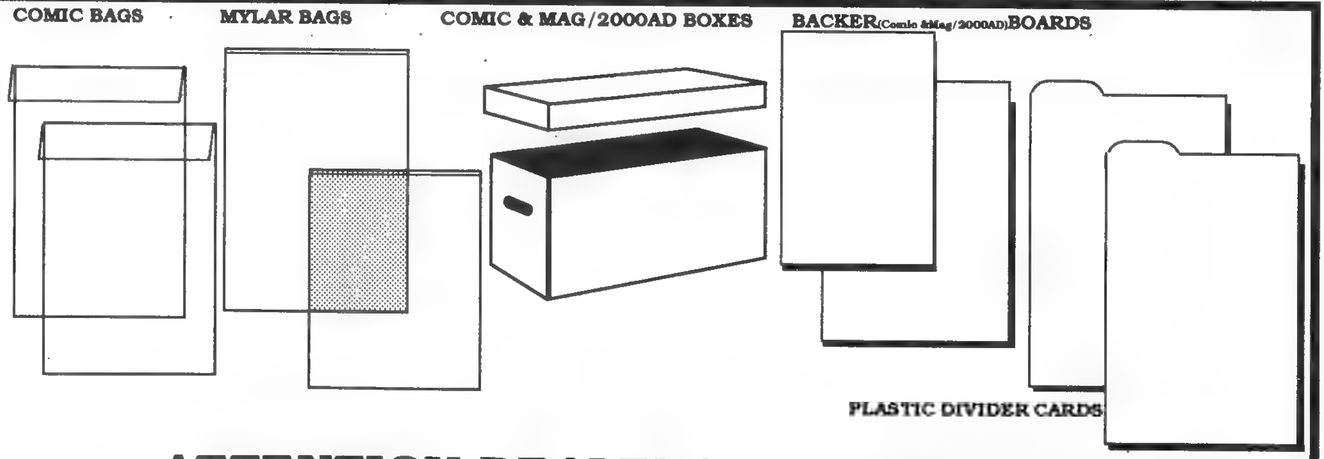

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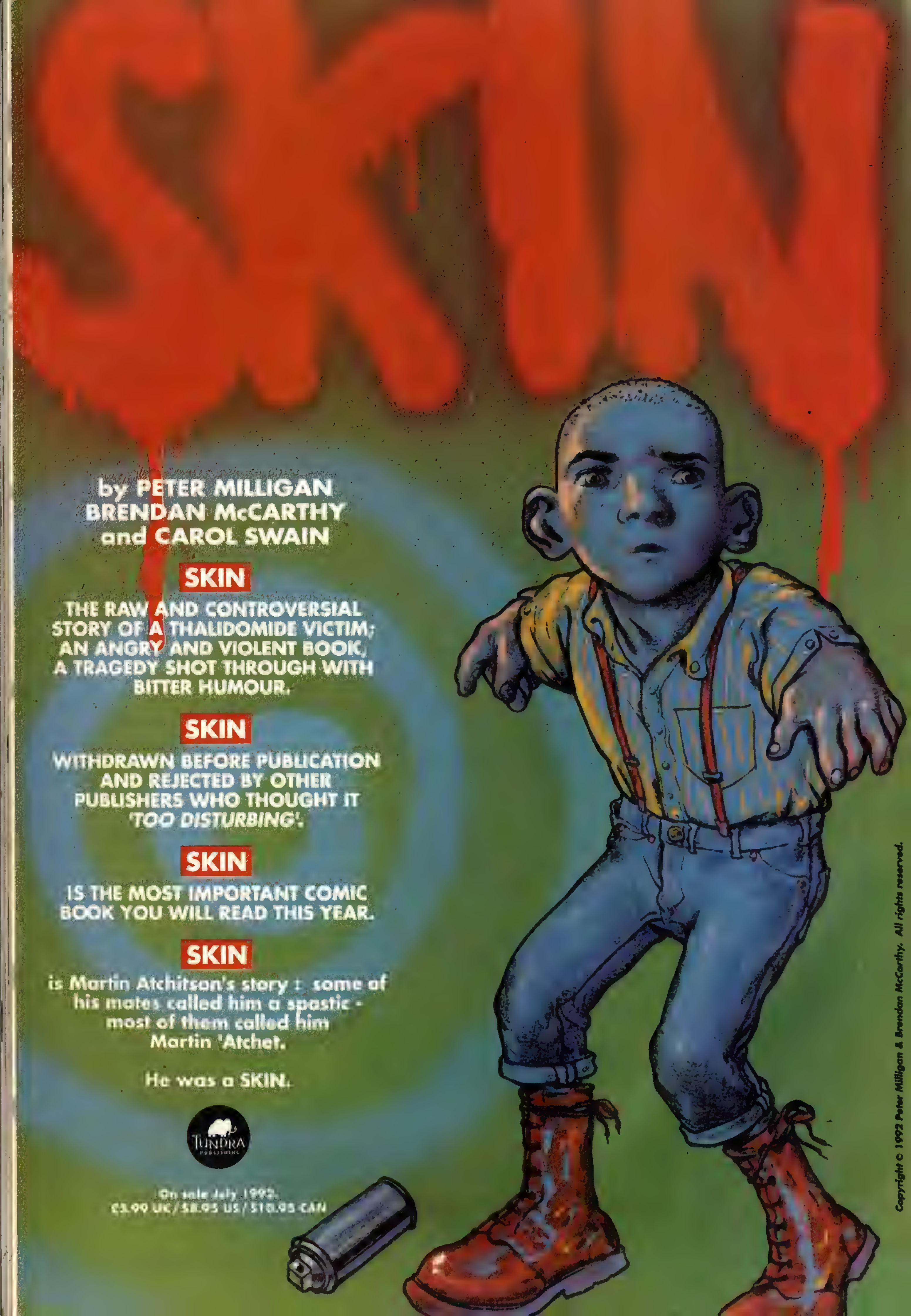

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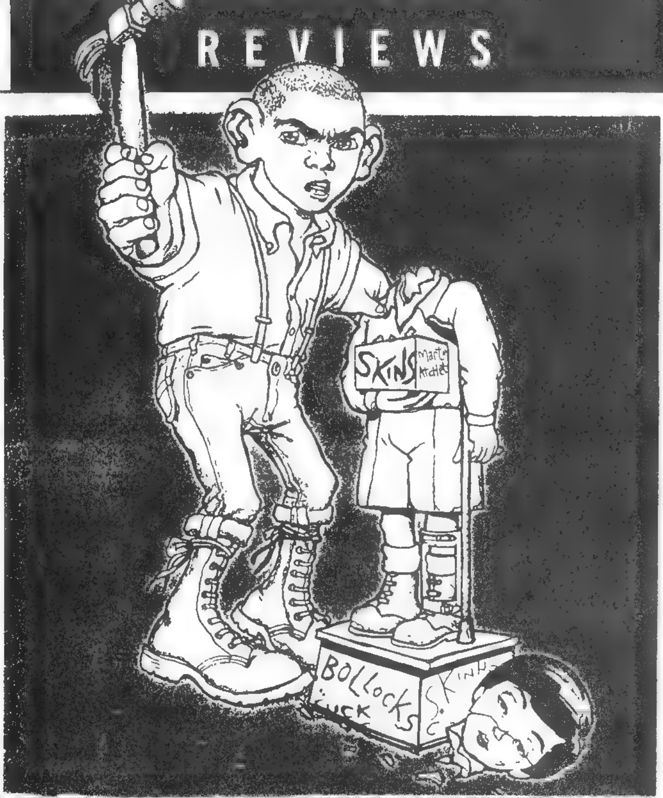


SKIN

by Peter Milligan, Brendan McCarthy and Carol Swain Tundra, £3.99.

Skin needs to be judged from two viewpoints – firstly in its own right, separate from the controversy which has surrounded its publication, and secondly in the context of that controversy.

So, first things first. *Skin* is 24 hours in the life of a Thalidomide boy who is also a skinhead (or perhaps it's the other way round).

Artistically, it's a triumph for McCarthy, page after page of glorious drawings, no panels, just images flowing flawlessly into one another. Vivid colours leap out and clobber the reader, adding punch to Milligan's savage words.

Milligan's writing is as violent and harsh as the story's subject. He's angry and – via his skin narrator – he wants the reader to know it, no messing. But the anger is controlled, and what is left unsaid is as telling as what's said.

It's definitely work for both men to be proud of, but what about the second criteria, the content of the book and its long struggle to be published?

The key phrase, which doesn't come from Milligan or McCarthy, is on the back cover. It says: "The most important comic book you will read this year."

But is it? In that it's finally seen print, yes. Comic publishers who prided themselves on being 'adult' in the late 1980s shied away from it. So much for comics growing up. But perhaps the fact that it's here now will give future taboo-breaking stories a smoother ride. We can hope.

Its indictment of the Thalidomide outrage, the attitudes that allowed it to happen and its effect on so many lives, will do some good, maybe. But it's hard to be optimistic.

The book's introduction points out that the Profumo affair was regarded as the scandal of 1960s Britain, but says in fact the real scandal was the drug Thalidomide, which caused a wave of horrific birth defects after being taken by pregnant women.

Taking this further, *Scandal*, the film of the Profumo affair from a few years back, was the talk of TV and the tabloids on its release. I doubt many people outside regular comic readers will even hear of *Skin*, and few of those will pay it any attention.

So, as a comic there is little to match it, it could even be called a landmark, and it demands to be reread again and again. But let's not heap upon it expectations it cannot possibly meet.

(Martin Feekins)

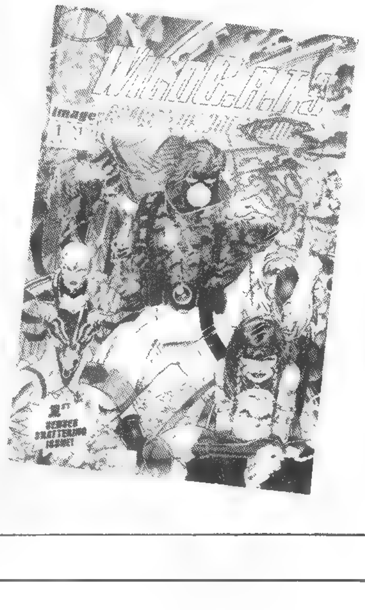
WILDC.A.T.S.: COVERT ACTION TEAMS #1

by Jim Lee, Image, $1.95

We have a problem here. There's a story here somewhere that tries to break out in the first few pages but quickly loses itself in cliches. There are no characters that stand out as individuals, in this team or any other recent title you care to name, the art is new-style Marvel without innovation, but still better than some – there's a hint of storytelling ability wanting to get out. The story itself is worthless, a hatch 'n' dispatch band of modern-day heroes: the big ultra-strong one, the miserable looking one, the angry looking one with the claws, and the two "babes" with breasts bigger than their heads.

It's so mindlessly predictable that you feel sorry for it. It will sell so well, the trading cards will sell so well, the line will crow about their success and the same old thing will be trotted out again next month and the month after. Shame on Jim Lee, one of the few Image creators who has shown in the past that he *can* tell a story when he honestly tries. This is knee-jerk comics and a lesson to Marvel never again to develop such a crass house style. Anatomy lessons all round, and attract writers who can tell stories and artists who can interpret them – please!

(Simon Hall)



DEADFACE: EARTH, WATER, AIR AND FIRE #1

by Eddie Campbell, Dark Horse, $2.50

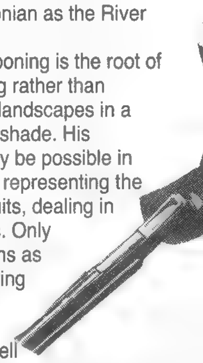
Eddie Campbell, Alan Moore's collaborator on 'From Hell', once described Greek Myth as "the root of storytelling". So his ongoing character Deadface is actually Bacchus, Greek God of wine and revelry, who gives barsmoke renditions of battles with Zeus (intermingled with tales of modern Glasgow pubcrawls), his intoxicating tales contradicting the orthodoxies of his academic sidekick Simpson.

This new four-parter is set in Sicily, where Bacchus traces the origins of its secret societies down to Mount Etna's rumblings. Beneath the surface, the underworld conspires for ownership of the eyes of power, forged to see the future or into the land of the dead. The air thickens with the threat of murder and mutilation, with the Ionian as the River Styx flows to Hades.

Campbell's cartooning is the root of all artistry, suggesting rather than showing figures and landscapes in a summary of line and shade. His storytelling would only be possible in comics; for example, representing the Mafia as sharks in suits, dealing in body parts for dollars. Only his use of photographs as backgrounds fail, jarring against this internal cartoon logic.

In a way Campbell should have been the first comics artist, but as it is he's still one of the medium's best branches.

(Gavin Burrows)



TALES FROM THE CRYPT #1

by various, EC/Russ Cochran, $1.50

That this is the third attempt in two years to reprint the EC 'New Trend' comics for today's mass market may indicate that William M. Gaines' psychological horror and SF stories hold little appeal for readers weaned on *Aliens*. Oh well, at least it gives those of us who can't afford Russ Cochran's lavish hardcover collections the chance to pick up what are justly regarded as some of the finest achievements in the history of the American comicbook.

This one first appeared in 1950 as *The Crypt of Terror 17* (carrying on the numbering from *Crime Patrol 16*, due to '50s newsdealers' reluctance to handle first issues!), and was EC's first horror comic. Compared with later efforts it's a clumsy affair, but that's precisely why it's fascinating; the formula of short stories with shock endings is there, but no-one had yet worked out how to use it to maximum effect. Al Feldstein's 'Death Must Come!' tells its tale in two pages, wastes five more without building up any tension at all, and ends with a laughably

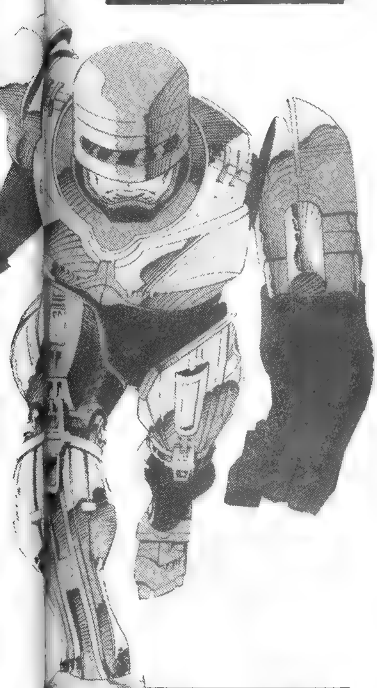
ONLY BUTCHERY!
THIS ISN'T FAIR! IT AIN'T RIGHT!

feeble twist. The anonymous 'The Man Who Was Death' and Johnny Craig's 'Curse Of The Full Moon' are similarly weakly plotted.

So why bother with this? Because what all the stories have in common is EC's greatest strength – a sense of horror founded on the breakdown of communication between the characters. In time, more confident use of plot formulae would combine with that to create many disturbing and subversive stories. Start here, and enjoy watching how Gaines and Co worked it out.

(Mike Kidson)

SHORT REVIEWS



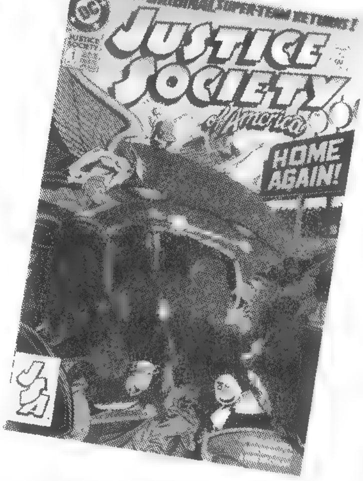
Tony Stark, Iron Man, is dead. Oh sure, like we're going to fall for *that* one again. Len Kaminski's story in **Iron Man 284** (Marvel, $1.25) is packed with the sort of dull, unimaginative plotting and dialogue we've all seen so many times before – although the piece of black Trekkie humour in the middle of the core dramatic scene is the work of a god-like genius. Had this sign of a pulse spread to the rest of the comic, the patient might have been saved, but as it is, Our Tone isn't the only stiff around here. Kev Hopgood's straightforward layouts carry the storytelling burden: if he could liven things up a bit and make his drawing style more attractive, he'd be on to something.

In **Thor 451** (Marvel, $1.25), our hero stands in Asgard, home of the immortal Gods, before Odin, the omniscient All-Father. "Whoa!", thinks Thor, "this guy's a major league deity!" It came as quite a shock to someone reared on those gloriously regal Kirby tales to find that Thor's mask now hides the face of Keanu Reeves, but I guess that's progress for you. Apart from a way cool scene of some of the Gods discussing battle tactics over pizza, this is comics written for American Vice-Presidents. A panel shows a sudden blaze of light erupting before Thor. He speaks: "A sudden blaze of light is erupting before me!"

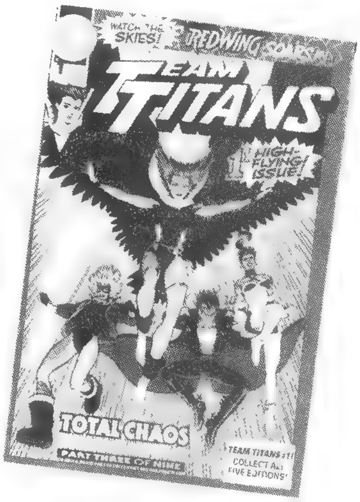
Walt Simonson was responsible for the last really good run of **Thor**, and here he is on **Robocop Versus the Terminator 1** (Dark Horse, $2.50). Aided by longtime lettering collaborator John Workman, his art crackles and fizzes its way through the issue.

Frank Miller's story may well have some surprises tucked up its sleeve, but for now it has a familiar feel to it: tough, terse characters, described with tough, terse captions. Maybe the time travel plot, where history is infinitely mutable, and stories can be told over and over with minor variations, can be taken as a motif to describe the sensation that Miller has travelled this way before.

More time travel in **Team Titans 1** (DC, $1.75), which can't possibly be taking a serious attempt to invite you into its bosom. Other than the confusion which usually results when tomorrow meets today, this issue is part three of a nine-part crossover with two other titles, and is available in five editions, each carrying an origin tale of one of those Team Titans: I don't *think* this is irony on DC's part, but the umbrella title for the whole mess is "Total Chaos". The most enticing edition features Adam Hughes on Redwing's story – layouts and linework which swoop and soar delightfully. Kevin Maguire's art on the second story, common to all versions, makes the piles of exposition and the tired bickering among the heroes easier to swallow.


THE ORIGINAL SUPER-TEAM RETURNS!
JUSTICE SOCIETY of America
HOME AGAIN!
JSA

Justice Society of America 1 (DC, $1.25) is so quaint, it might well have come through a time warp itself. All square jaws and cheeky smiles, the first super-team has tossed aside its collective walking frame (having appeared first in 1940) to fight evil once more. Older readers who remember the old, naive DC style personified in titles like Cary Bates' **Flash** will wallow luxuriously in the atrocious jokes and visual puns: those more attuned to the bloodletting and vengeance of today (a majority, it seems) will be scratching their heads in bewilderment. Shouldn't last five minutes.



WE'LL CHECK AGAIN IN HER NINTH MONTH TO SEE--
OOH! PAUL! I--I THINK MY WATER BROKE!
WHAT?
BUT, HON, THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE...

Another revived golden oldie, and contemporary of the Justice Society, avoids nostalgia and follows an alternative route in **Black Condor** (DC, $1.25). Issue 4 includes a ghostly cameo by the original behind its fetching cover,

continued over

SMALL PRESS

New Flesh 1 & 2, 40 & 36pp respectively, £1.50 & £1.60, from Viscera Publishing, 3 Fl, 8 Nicolson Square, Edinburgh CH8 9BH

Well, this little package turned up along with local press reports about the "new comic book that's set to shock", "Gory comic's handout bid sparks row", "horror comic shock", etc, etc, etc. Well, you can ignore that type of press bilge as per usual!

'Lonely Hearts' is written by Tom Eglington and drawn by Andy P. It has a rough, scratchy style with the odd good panel but all I could do after reading it was sigh. Nothing to catch my imagination or horrify me here. Bruce Campbell (writer) and Willy Cheng (artist) produce 'The Last Side Show' and Willy Cheng's artwork is the saving grace – but in issue 2 he is replaced by a less talented artist, Gregore Fergie, why I do not know but it was a B-I-G mistake. I'll admit that the story involving an area between life and death was not exactly novel but showed interesting Chinese comic influenced artwork. The poster in issue 1 is an old Victorian print and why it was included I don't know! Eglington and Andy P's 'Little No Life' was 5pp of pure rubbish based on a lot of women going into a toilet and aborting fetuses. Or was it one woman and one fetus? Who cares? *Sigh*. Stu Jennett does a nice job on 'Meat Salad' and the rest of the issue just wanders off with nothing to capture my interest. *A very poor* first issue.

Issue 2 fares no better except that my favourite artist (as some of you may have gathered) Dave Stephenson has

continued over

but the title character is a new boy in town. He spends the issue wandering around, trying to figure out his place in the world, but the story doesn't really spark. Artist Rags Morales has an interesting style, like a more graceful Shawn McManus, and does a good job with visual characterisations.

Namor the Sub-Mariner's feeling a bit out of sorts as well, in issue 30 of his title (Marvel, $1.25). Despite outstripping both the JSA and the Black Condor in age, his mental state is down to amnesia rather than senility. John Byrne and Jae Lee contribute a very thin episode which seems to be striving to achieve a stark, dramatic mood, but manages only ponderousness. Lee's artwork wants to be stylish; sparsely rendered pages with continual use of silhouettes to hide the ragged drawing are not the way to go about it.

Imagine the world millenia from now: civilisations have risen and done great scientific and cultural deeds, only to crumble into ashes, helpless in the current of time. The historians of one such society are excited to find a time capsule; its inscription indicates that it's from the late twentieth century, an era which has been completely lost to them previously. With due ceremony and much anticipation, it is opened – what will the contents be? What will they tell the academics about our time, about how we lived and what we believed in? Now imagine the contents as a bottle of chocolate milk and a copy of Bob Burden's **Flaming Carrot 28** (Dark Horse, $2.25). Don't you know exactly how they feel?

Which brings us to the August issue of **Deadline** (Deadline, $1.95), and the usual feast of pop culture iconography and bizarreness. **Deadline**'s become somewhat of an institution on the British comics scene, despite not quite having reached its fourth birthday yet. It's outlived other adult comics (for want of a more appropriate term) such as **Revolver** and **Blast!** through a combination of shrewdness and bloody-mindedness, which has made its own audience away from the comic shop regulars. Some of the strips can seem a little self-conscious in their efforts to get weird, but this issue also includes cartoonists as diverse as Dakin, Stik and Shaky Kane, and a welcome reprint of some Jaime Hernandez from **Love And Rockets**, which deserves as big an audience as it can get.

And if you're going to UKCAC . . . have a good one!

(Richard Hill)

Review copies courtesy of Birmingham's Fantastic Store (021-643 3667).

continued from previous page

contributed 'Meet The Crowleys' and pushed up its interest value 100%.

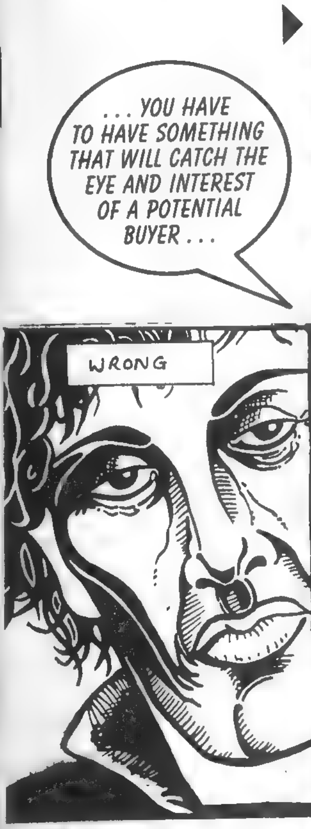
I've briefly mentioned 'The Last Side Show' so I'll avoid part 2 here (it really is dreadful). The poster is . . . uh . . . mmm . . . uh, well, a poster not worth mentioning. Actually, I'm being unfair to Stu Jennett there – it is a far superior illo of the character from Eglington & P's 'Razorback' than the strip produced! By the time I got to Philip Kurtz's 'The Fatality Junkie' I had lost interest and something has got to be wrong to get me to say that! Save your money.

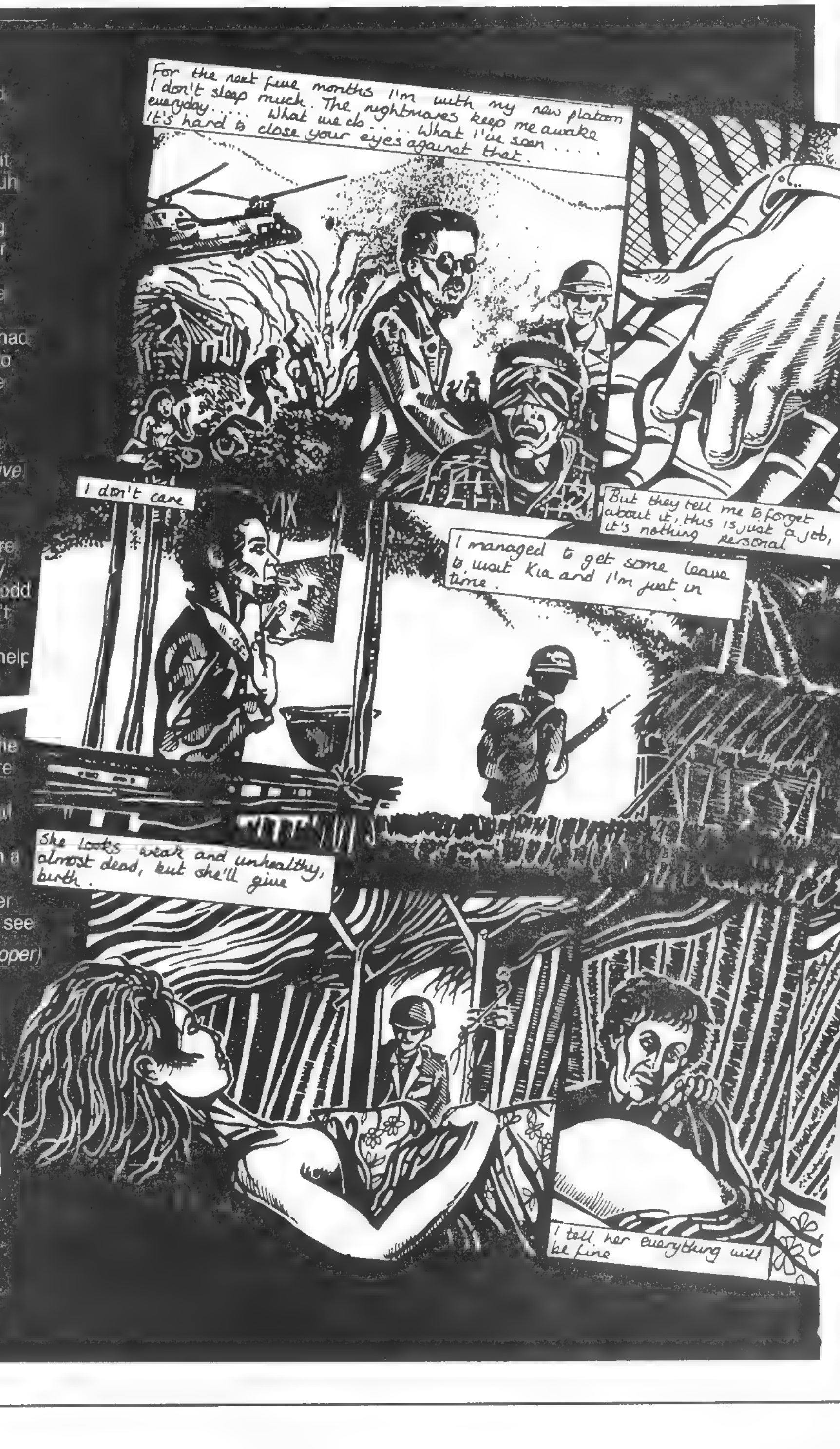
The Imperfect Elm 001, 16pp, £1.00 from: Michael Exelby, 21 Pulleyn Drive, Tadcaster Road, York, N. Yorks YO2 2DY.

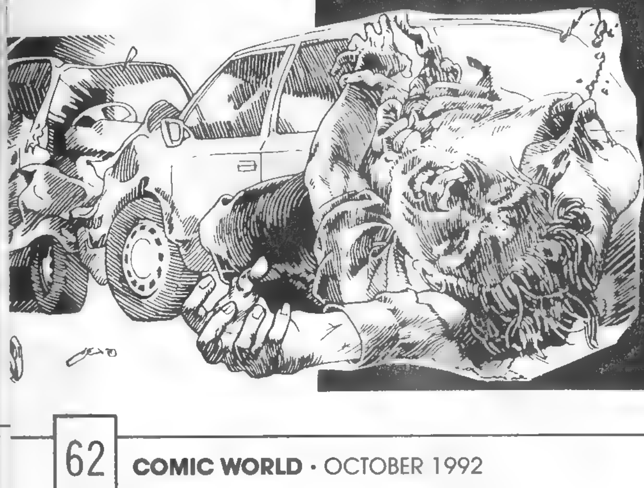
Nice cover. Sixteen pages and six are blank, black and, well, blank. All very minimalist and though there are the odd two panels that look good, cover isn't too bad, the writing is small and oft times *very* difficult to read. I cannot help but think that there's a bizzarre joke being played on me here. If it isn't [illegible] joke then Mr Exelby ca[illegible] those young fellows at *The New Flesh* in the "we have a helluva lot to learn before we try publishing a comic" corner.

You have to have something that will catch the eye and interest of a potential buyer if you want to publish a comic and I'm afraid all I found here was an enormous waste of ink, paper and money. I will willingly pay *not* to see these titles again.

(Terry Hooper)


. . . YOU HAVE TO HAVE SOMETHING THAT WILL CATCH THE EYE AND INTEREST OF A POTENTIAL BUYER . . .
WRONG


For the next five months I'm with my new platoon I don't sleep much. The nightmares keep me awake everyday . . . . What we do . . . . What I've seen . . . . It's hard to close your eyes against that.
But they tell me to forget about it, this is just a job, it's nothing personal
I don't care
I managed to get some leave to visit Kia and I'm just in time.
She looks weak and unhealthy, almost dead, but she'll give birth.
I tell her everything will be fine



All illustrations 'New Flesh'

GO ON – GET YOURSELF WRAPPED UP IN...
DOCTOR WHO MAGAZINE
NEWS, VIEWS, BEHIND-THE-SCENES FEATURES
AND ALL-NEW ADVENTURES!

Collector's News.

LIVERPOOL CARTOONISTS WORKSHOP

REALLY! ARMAGEDDON HAS KILLED THE ART OF CONVERSATION!

The London Cartoon Centre has had a fair amount of press in comic circles, but under the tutelage of Ian Hering, students at City College, Liverpool, have had the opportunity to learn how to create comics at the Liverpool Cartoonists Workshop which offers three courses: gag cartooning, comic art, and finally writing for comics.

Burgeoning Bisleys and would be Wagners are also taught other vital skills, such as how to market their work. The L.C.W. has already had a couple of successes. Course tutor Ian Hering takes up the story:

"We've got a couple of people who have been working for Marvel Comics, and one or two who, I would say, are about six months away from working for D.C. or Marvel. There's also an increasing number of people working for the small press, which is the other way of getting into comics these days.

"Two of our graduates are starting up their own title – *Mindbenders.*"

L.C.W. requires only one thing from its members. Here's a clue: it's not a degree in art from Gotham University or a Ph.D. in pretentious dialogue.

"You have to *want* to do it," says Ian. "If you don't want to be a cartoonist or draw for comics, you probably won't go beyond a certain stage. We've had a few people who weren't sure whether they wanted to, and they've come in and done some pretty good work."

Such is the respect for L.C.W. that they have attracted some of the cream of British comics creators over the past few months; the list of guest talkers includes Bryan Talbot, David Lloyd, Paul Gravett and the producers of *Downside.*

Just as the London Cartoon Centre has *Silicon Fish*, City College has its own range of comics. The regular *North By Northwest* has been joined by *City Comic*, an annual end-of-term showcase which has reached its third issue, mixing comedy and drama in equal measure. There's also *Secret Love* which is based on student's interpretations of the 1950s pop song.

Ian has tried to steer his flock away from their current tastes in comics and forced them to look at different influences. As a result, a number of artists have produced work in these comics with their own individual style. Richard Woods draws like Jamie Hernandez and has the same line in social observation, Bill Naylor has an eye for the biting one-liner, while Susan Risley has done some witty remixes of modern art and Mark Allen could be likened to a Milligan – Pete or Spike.

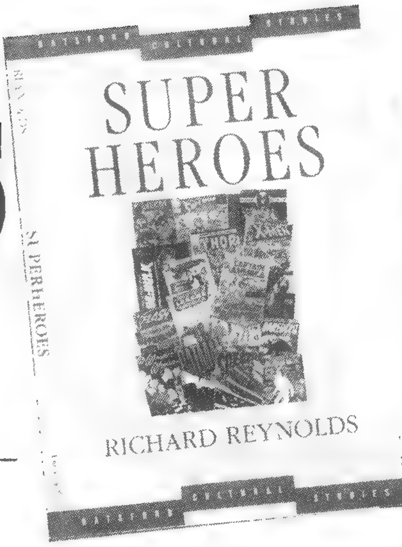
Ian's intention in publishing these and other magazines is not just to provide something tasty for the fans. There's a more serious aim: "It's partly a record for people who have been in the workshop. If people say 'Well, what do you do?' they can just hand them a copy. It's also partly if we are asked by graphic designers and cartoon agencies. They can say 'I like that style', or 'I like that person's work'. So it's a marketing device as well."

So what would Ian consider a success? One of his students working for DC or Dark Horse? Or just someone getting enjoyment out of their work?

"I think it's inbetween. The key is enjoyment. We have people who come here regularly who aren't ever going to make a living out of it, but they certainly like the medium. It's certainly not the number who will go into the industry – that's a relatively small percentage. The number of people who enter the small press is much larger. The people who will learn skills to do things like greetings cards or daily cartoons is quite large."

(Kev McCready)

***North By Northwest*, *City Comics 3*, and *Secret Love* are available at good comic shops. For more information on these titles and on courses at City College, contact Ian Hering, The Liverpool Cartoonists Workshop, City College, Clarence Street, Liverpool L3 5TP. Telephone: 051 708 0423, extension 123.**



HEROES

Few academic texts are written about superheroes, and those that do exist tend to be extremely pretentious and full of sociological jargon as the authors try to justify the fact that they have been reading comics.

Fortunately, Richard Reynolds seems to feel no such compulsion and as a result has produced a well-balanced study with a minimum of big words.

His book, *Superheroes* (Batsford, £9.99) looks at the development of superheroes following the debut of Superman, the mythologies which have grown around them and the significance of costumes and continuity. He also examines three "key texts" – *X-Men 108–143, The Dark Knight Returns* and *Watchmen.*

Much of what he says prompts the response: "I already kew that." But in fact Reynolds is setting out clearly and bringing into the open for debate what were, for me at least, only half-formed notions and understandings.

Superheroes, which is designed as an introductory study, helps bring the genre into sharper focus for the regular reader and provides a painless entry into the field for newcomers.

The only irritation is that the reproduction quality of the pages of art used to illustrate varios points is poor.

(Martin Feekins)

NATIONAL MUSEUM TO OPEN

The National Museum of Cartoon Art has found itself a temporary home thanks to property developers Lynton plc, who have loaned CAT an unlet office building. The exhibition is housed in 1,800 square feet of ground floor gallery space, and as well as showing cartoons from the CAT's own permanent collection, will also be showing the collection of the late Allan Cuthbertson, an actor who played alongside Benny Hill, Tommy Cooper and Morecombe & Wise amongst others.

The Museum is based at 2 Carriage Row, 163-203 Eversholt Street, London NW1 (not far from Euston Street Station), and will be open to the public from Tuesday September 22 until Christmas, although viewing is limited to the following days and times: Tuesday 2pm-6pm, Wednesday 12pm-4pm, Thursday 2pm-7pm. Parties of 10 or over should book in advance. For more information and bookings phone Paul Gravett on 071 731 1372.

Paul is also the founder of Strip Search, the touring comic strip exhibition which will be at Solihull Central Library Exhibition Hall until October 10 before travelling to Lucca. Further details from Sue Finnigan on 021 704 6961.

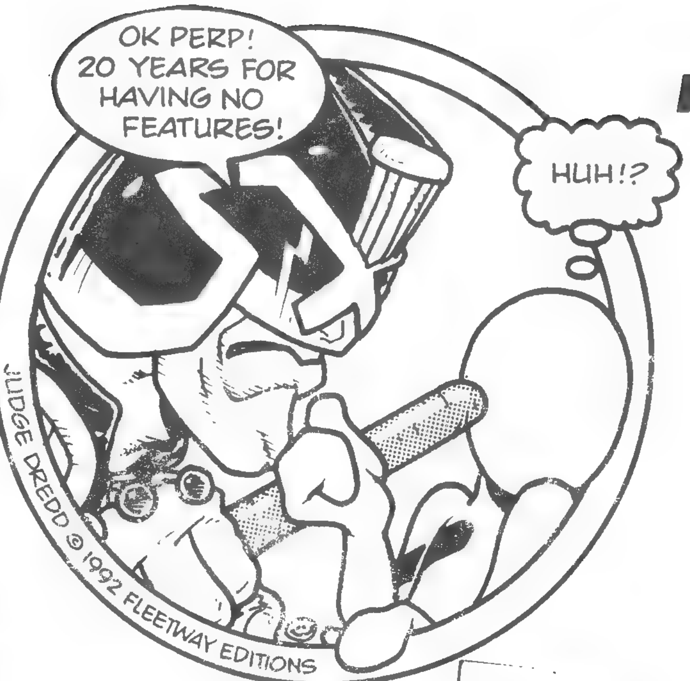
SSI NEWS

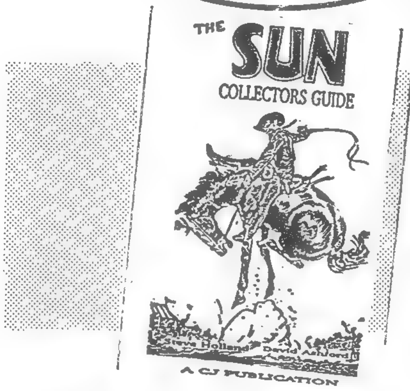
The SSI meeting for September 24 will include Jon Davidge, Steve McManus and others from Fleetway Editions talking about their current projects and answering questions. Entrance to the meeting is £2.00, which is donated to the London Cartoon Centre.

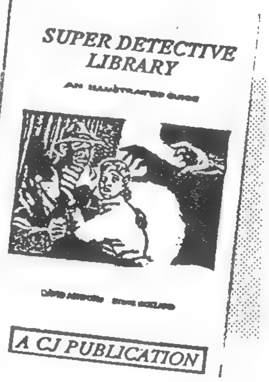
The cost of the SSI submissions guide has had to go up to a £1.50 postal order due to the increased size of the package. You should also enclose a large SAE, and mark the outside of the envelope Writer or Artist as appropriate.

The *Take Comics Seriously* leaflet is free for an SAE.

Meanwhile, the latest issue of *Comics Forum*, the quarterly journal of the SSI has recently hit the streets, with 64 pages for £2.50. It's another high-standard issue, with Brad! Brooks on French humour-meister Franquin, interviews with Peter Bagge and Neil Gaiman, and a slightly out-of-date piece on *Glory, Glory*. Still, it's worth the price for the rare Peter Bagge pics. alone. This is available in limited quantities outside of the SSI, but if you have any problems finding one, try the editorial address below.


OK PERP! 20 YEARS FOR HAVING NO FEATURES!
HUH!?
SSI
JUDGE DREDD © 1992 FLEETWAY EDITIONS





MORE COLLECTORS GUIDES

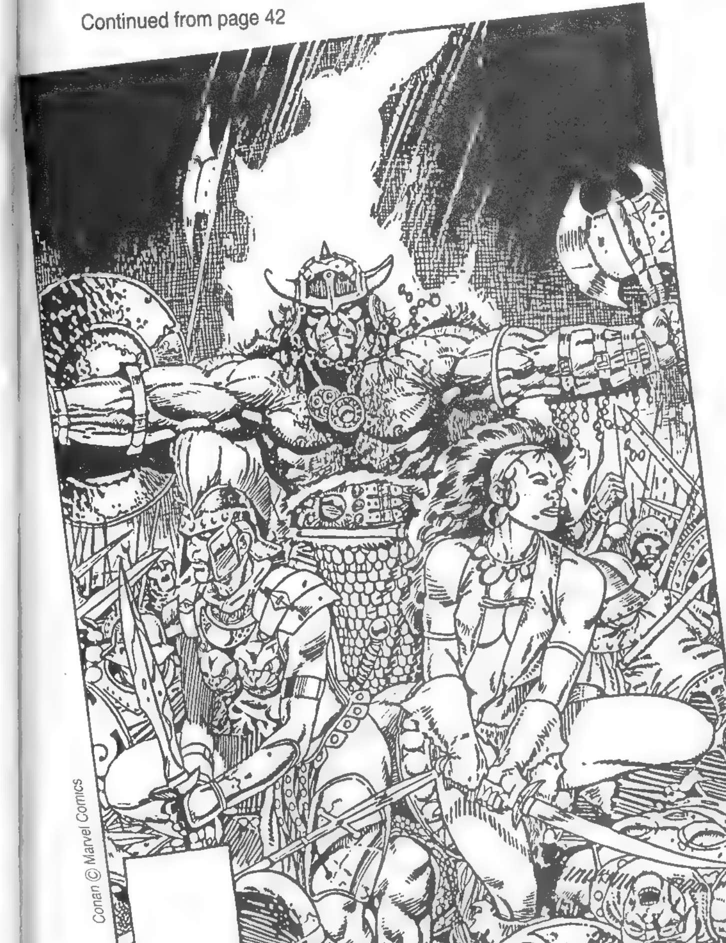
Bryon Whitworth has recently published two further volumes in his series of British comics collectors guides, both companions to earlier volumes. Super Detective Library *is the first to hand, a comprehensive checklist of all 188 volumes in this highly collected series, giving information on title, artist and scriptwriter, as well as an introduction by co-author David Ashford and reprinting each cover. This volume is the second in the library index series which has already covered* Thriller Picture Library *and will shortly conclude with an index to* Cowboy Comics.

The second volume to hand is a companion to the Comet Collector's Guide, *and covers its sister paper,* The Sun, *listing every story to appear in that paper, with information on artists, scriptwriters and a trio of appendices giving a closer look at three of the main characters from the long-running paper. Extensively illustrated and, again, introduced by David Ashford, it will be followed by a guide to* Knockout *in the not too distant future.*

Whitworth is also one of the largest dealers in British comics and has just issued a new catalogue.

Bryan Whitworth, 17 Hill Street,
Colne, Lancs. BB8 0DH

Continued from page 42



this year."

One thing I was surprised to learn from Colin was a 'story-behind-the-story' about 'America' which Colin did with John Wagner – heralded as one of Wagner's finest works, and which Colin feels is his best work to date.

"I'd say that 'America' is the one thing that I'm really happy with. I think it's got something to do with not being told the whole story when I started working on it. I knew roughly what the story was – that there would be betrayals and that Benny loved America, but you weren't too sure if she loved him or not.

"But the part about Benny betraying America and getting the body transplant – I didn't know anything about that. So in the scenes at the beginning when she's sitting at the mirror – I was actually drawing *America* – not the one you discover at the end. If I'd know about that part of the story in advance, I think I would have made some subtle changes to her, and it may not have turned out as good. If I had known that it wasn't America, I'm pretty sure the readers would have too. It wasn't even intended to be like that – John just forgot to tell me about it – It wasn't until I was about half way through the story that he actually told me, thinking that I already knew.

"I was quite pleased how that happened because it's one of those things that help a story along. I'm really pleased how the whole thing turned out."

COLIN MACNEIL STRIPOGRAPHY

- **Tales of Mega City One**: Quarantine (in *2000AD 526*, 13 Jun 1987, by T.B. Grover)
- **Strontium Dog** (by Alan Grant):
  - A Sorry Case (in *2000AD 540-543*, 19 Sep-10 Oct 1987)
  - The Town That Died of Shame (in *2000AD Sci-Fi Special*, 1988)
  - The Final Solution (in *2000AD 682-687*, 9 Jun-14 Jul 1990)
- **Tales From the Doghouse** (by Alan Grant):
- Back-To-Front Jones (in *2000AD 578*, 11 Jun 1988)
  - Tom "Birdy" Lilley (in *2000AD 579*, 18 Jun 1988)
- **Chopper** (by John Wagner).
  - Soul on Fire (in *2000AD 594-597*, 1 Oct-22 Oct 1988)
  - Song of the Surfer (in *2000AD 654-665*, 25 Nov 1989-10 Feb 1990)
- **Judge Dredd**:
  - Our Man in Hondo (in *2000AD 608-611*, 7 Jan-28 Jan 1989, by Alan Grant)
  - John Cassavetes is Dead (in *2000AD 627*, 20 May 1989, by Alan Grant)
  - 10,000,000 is a Dangerous Age, Cynthia (in *2000AD 628*, 27 May 1989, by Alan Grant)
  - Dead Juves Curve (in *2000AD 636*, 22 Jul 1989, by Alan Grant)
  - Top Dogs (in *Judge Dredd Annual 1991*, 1990, by John Wagner)
  - Firepower (in *2000AD 736*, 22 Jun 1991, by Garth Ennis)
- **America** (in *Judge Dredd Megazine 1-7* Oct 1990-Apr 1991, by John Wagner)
- **The Road to Hell** (in *Toxic! 30-31*, 17 Oct-24 Oct 1991, by Dwayne McDuffie & Matt Wayne)
- **Batman** Mercy (in *Legends of the Dark Knight 37*, Sep 1992, by Dan Abnett & Andy Lanning)

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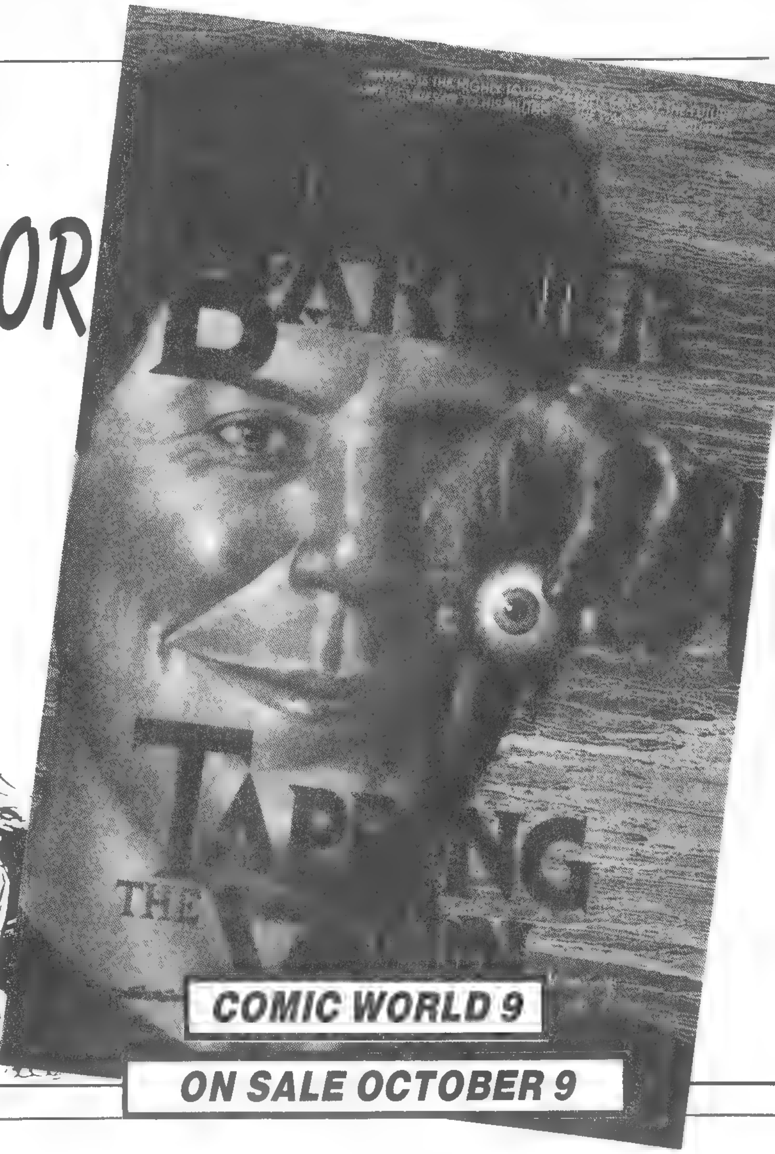


COMIC WORLD 9

ON SALE OCTOBER 9

I TOLD YOU ENQUIRY DESK WOULD GIVE ME ALL THE ANSWERS!
COMIC

ENQUIRY DESK

Q Back in the olden days when *2000AD* was a young publication, they employed an artist called Jesus Redondo. He was one of the many Spanish and South American artists they used on their early issues but had considerably more flair and individuality than most. Although most of the stories he was given were pretty naff, his art was never less than spectacular, and was (I think) an important influence on Ian Gibson. He also drew the second book of 'Nemesis', which Titan didn't reprint. Why not?

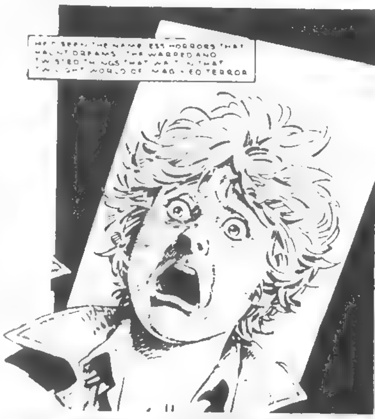
What else has Redondo worked on and what is he doing now?

Patrick Brown, Belfast

A Jesus Redondo was born in Spain during the 1940s, and began working in the UK in the 1970s, through the offices of the Creaciones agency who also handle many other Spanish and South American artists, including the likes of *2000AD*'s father and son Casanovas (Sam Slade, Robohunter) team, and Alcatena, who was drawing for British comics long before achieving success with Tim Truman on the *Hawkworld* mini-series from DC.

His first assignments were drawing for girls comics for both I.P.C. and D.C. Thomson, moving to the newly formed *2000AD* in 1977 to draw 'M.A.C.H.1'. His finest work as far as many are concerned was 'Mind Wars' which began in the second issue of *Starlord* in 1978, set in a future galactic war and concerning two 17 year old twins whose mind-powers are artificially heightened by alien forces. It was followed by more science fiction tales for *2000AD*, including one and a half dozen 'Future Shocks' and a handful of other series.

His best remembered strip is 'Nemesis Book 2', which was not reprinted by Titan Books, essentially because Pat Mills was unhappy with it in comparison to the work done by Kev O'Neill who had created and originally drawn the stories. Steve MacManus, then editor of *2000AD*, recalls the series as being pretty good. "He did a good Purity Brown," says Steve, a point echoed by David Roach, who later drew 'Purity's Story', basing his version of Purity on Redondo's.


Monster, from Scream!

One of his longest strips was 'Monster' which ran for a year in the pages of *Scream!*, the story of a boy who discovers his misshapen uncle has been kept locked in the family attic all his life. It was followed by another longish stint on 'The Nightmare', about another young lad who is chased across wartorn Europe by an evil Nazi. Since then he has done little work for the UK, perhaps the only notable being a short spell on 'Dan Dare' in *Eagle*.

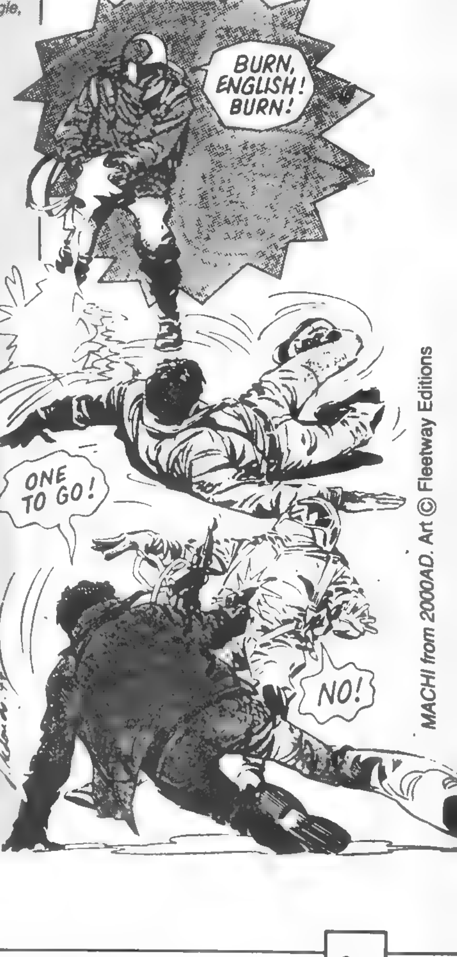
As to him being an influence on Ian Gibson, well Ian worked through the same agency drawing romance comics for Sweden, and counts a number of Spanish artists amongst his influences, including Redondo.

Redondo is married and has three daughters, and lives a quiet life in Baebolitz near Madrid in Spain. He's not as flamboyant as his artwork may suggest, we gather, but is a fast and attractive worker. Currently he draws for *Cemic* in Sweden, a series about a Captain who runs a yacht around the Mediterranean and Adriatic coast. He also draws a variety of stories for the girls comic *Tina* in Holland, and has done some advertising, including artwork for a book on wines.

The following stripography hopefully lists all of his work for boys comics, but the girls' papers have been woefully covered in the past, and is perhaps an area where our readers can help. Just get in touch via the editorial address.

JESUS REDONDO STRIPOGRAPHY

Sing a Song of Terror (in *Spellbound 11-20*, 4 Dec 1976-5 Feb 1977)
Dangerous Days for the Tiny Taylors (in *Spellbound 22-34*, 19 Feb-14 May 1977)
M.A.C.H.1:
  (complete stories) (in *2000AD 13*, 7 May 1977, by Robert Flynn; reprinted in *Eagle*, 1 Nov 1986/ 17, 18 Jun 1977, by W. Allen; reprinted in *Eagle*, 29 Nov 1986)
  The Planet Killers (in *2000AD 27-29*, 27 Aug-10 Sep 1977, by Pat Mills; reprinted in *Eagle*, 7 Feb-28 Feb 1987)
  The Dolphin Tapes (in *2000AD 54-55*, 4 Mar-11 Mar 1978, by Steve McManus; reprinted in *Eagle*, 4 Jul-11 Jul 1987)
The Mystery Birds of Mora (in *Spellbound 57-66*, 22 Oct-24 Dec 1977)
Mind Wars (in *Starlord*, 20 May-7 Oct 1978, by Alan Hebden)
Tharg's Future Shocks:
  (Poacher) (in *2000AD 85*, 7 Oct 1978, by Barry Clements)
  The Machine (in *2000AD 224*, 8 Aug 1981, by Kelvin Gosnell)
  Giant Leap! (in *2000AD 230*, 19 Sep 1981, by Kelvin Gosnell)
  The Red House (in *2000AD 231*, 26 Sep 1981, by Steve Moore)
  Love Thy Neighbour (in *2000AD 242*, 12 Dec 1981, by Kelvin Gosnell)
  The Lonulos Run! (in *2000AD 258*, 3 Apr 1982, by David Perry)
  Nigel Goes a-Hunting! (in *2000AD 259*, 10 Apr 1982, by Staccato)
  The Writing on the Wall (in *2000AD 268*, 12 Jun 1982, by Alan Moore)
  One Christmas During Eternity (in *2000AD 271*, 3 Jul 1982, by Alan Moore)
  The Disturbed Digestions of Dr Dibworthy (in *2000AD 273*, 17 Jul 1982, by Alan Moore)
  The Martians (in *2000AD 274*, 24 Jul 1982, by Dave Perry)
  Sunburn (in *2000AD 282*, 18 Sep 1982, by Alan Moore)
  Beware the Man in Black! (in *2000AD 286*, 16 Oct 1982, by Dave Perry)
  The Pioneer (in *2000AD 302*, 5 Feb 1983, by Alan Hebden)
  Ring Road (in *2000AD 320*, 11 Jun 1983, by Alan Moore)
  The Time Machine (in *2000AD 324*, 8 Jul 1983, by Alan Moore)
  Class of '65 (in *2000AD 381*, 1 Sep 1984, by Alan Hebden)
  The Edge of Forever (in *2000AD 429*, 3 Aug 1985, by Alan Hebden)
Project Overkill (in *2000AD 121-126*, 14 Jul-18 Aug 1979, by Kelvin Gosnell)
Space Wars (in *Crunch 41-54*, 27 Oct 1979-26 Jan 1980)
Time Quake (in *2000AD 148-151*, 19 Jan-27 Mar 1980, by Jack Adrian)
The Mind of Wolfie Smith (in *2000AD 162-176*, 26 Apr-6 Sep 1980, by Tom Tully)
Return to Armageddon (in *2000AD 185-195,198-218*, 8 Nov 1980-17 Jan 1981, 7 Feb-27, Jun 1981, by Malcolm Shaw)
Nemesis: Book 2 (in *2000AD 246-257*, 9 Jan-27 Mar 1982, by Pat Mills)
Tharg's Time Twisters:
  (Joyriders) (in *2000AD 311*, 9 Apr 1983, by Alan Hebden)
  (Running Out of Time) (in *2000AD 362*, 31 Mar 1984, by Jack Adrian)
The Promised Planet (in *Starblazer 96*, May 1983, by G. Parker)
Pirates of the Ether Sea (in *Starblazer 100*, Jul 1983, by Ray Aspden)
The Amstor Computer:
  Journey on the Junk Food Express (in *Eagle*, 22 Oct 1983, by Alan Hebden)
  "I'm Coming Home..." (in *Eagle*, 25 Feb 1984, by A. Stone)
  Superstition (in *Eagle*, 23 Jun 1984, by Chris Lowder)
  Escape (in *Eagle & Scream!*, 29 Oct 1984, by A. Stone)
The Great Infinity Foul Up (in *2000AD 356-357*, 18 Feb-25 Feb 1984, by Jack Adrian)
Monster (in *Scream!*, 31 Mar-30 Jun 1984/ in *Eagle & Scream!*, 1 Sep 1984-30 Mar 1985, by Rick Clark)
The Nightmare (in *Battle*, 17 Aug 1985-11 Oct 1986, by John Richards, Terry Magee)
The Executioner (in *Starblazer 165*, Mar 1986, by William McLoughlin)
Odds Against (in *Battle*, 8 Nov 1986, by Scott Goodall)
Death's Head (in *Battle*, 3 Jan-17 Jan 1987, by James Nicholas)
Dan Dare (in *Eagle*, 1 Aug-8 Aug 1987, by Tom Tully)
Ravenmaster (in *Starblazer 257*, Jan 1990, by Martin Gately)


BURN, ENGLISH! BURN!
ONE TO GO!
NO!
MACHI from 2000AD. Art © Fleetway Editions

LETTERS PAGE!

LETTERS SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO COMIC COLLECTOR LETTERS, 89 EAST HILL, COLCHESTER, ESSEX CO1 2QN.

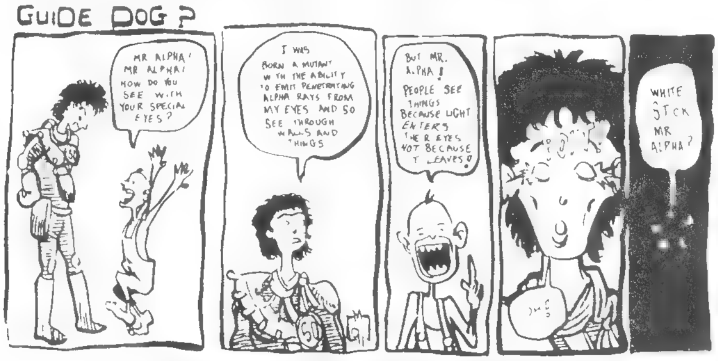
COMIC CORTINA'S: A CASE FOR SELLING CHEAP

Gavin Burrows
Weymouth

Dear Steve,
Just a quick reply to Rhoda Bracewell's letter concerning the financial side of comics in #7. Basically I'm very sympathetic to her viewpoint, especially regarding back issues. Granted, comic shop owners must be feeling the pinch like every industry in what's left of Britain's economy, but for a retail industry the amount of 'dead stock' they hold is astronomical. Walk into any comic shop and you're guaranteed to see stacks and stacks of back issues gathering dust and feeling unwanted while they take up a fair proportion of display space. Why are they not shifting? Possibly because they cost at least the same price as a new comic and, as you say, buyers are always going to prefer the latest 'hot' issues.

So why-oh-why don't retailers price back issues at reasonable levels (I remember the days when old issues went for no more than half the price of new ones *because* they were old - let's face it, second hand cars don't cost the same as new ones unless they happen to be classic 50s or 60s models, and by the same count, the vast majority of old comics don't rate much higher, relatively speaking, than a 1970s cortina would in a car lot!). That way, dead stock would move, 'hot' comics would have an alternative ("hmm, Rob Liefeld's latest discharge, or 3 Gerber Spider-Man's...") and the retailers all-important cash-flow would get a much needed injection. Shop owners may scream "profit margin" at me, but what's more important in a recession - dead stock gathering dust or money in the till?

And it does work: last year I sold privately well over 1000 1970s and 80s comics (including a lot of 'uncollectables') for an average price of 15p, and every last one went. I rest my case!


GUIDE DOG ?
MR ALPHA! MR ALPHA! HOW DO YOU SEE WITH YOUR SPECIAL EYES?
I WAS BORN A MUTANT WITH THE ABILITY TO EMIT PENETRATING ALPHA RAYS FROM MY EYES AND SO SEE THROUGH WALLS AND THINGS
BUT MR. ALPHA! PEOPLE SEE THINGS BECAUSE LIGHT ENTERS THEIR EYES NOT BECAUSE IT LEAVES!
WHITE STICK MR ALPHA?

EXCLUSIVE PICS!

Reuben Willmott
Ipswich
Dear Comic Collector (soon to be Comic World!),First of all let me congratulate you on a wonderful publication. It was great to walk into W.H. Smiths on the way out of college one day and see the staff putting #1 of a magazine solely about comics onto the shelf. You picked the ideal time with next to no competition. All the suggestions I could have made about improvements and ideas seem to have come to pass already. The miracles of modern telepathy!

The only suggestion I can now make is about the illustrations used in interviews. I feel that the interview would be more 'exclusive' if you used unpublished art from forthcoming projects or better still unpublished work or sketches, rather than some naff photocopies from your comic collection.

Naff photocopies? Most of our illustrations - especially colour - are taken from slides or transparencies where they are available. For most of the older books we use the real thing - which can be quite traumatic because to film the page it has to be perfectly flat, and that means taking the comic apart. On something like the first Spider-Man spread last issue that would have meant destroying £8000 worth of comics, so we do resort to photocopying on something like that.

Even half-tones can break up lettering when reduced down, so sometimes it's a bit of guess-work as to what will reproduce best when the magazine is printed, but I think for the number of illustrations we present each issue (over 150 last issue, for instance) we've done pretty well.

This month we've got exclusive pics. from Bryan Talbot, Steve Yeowell, Colin Macneil, Liam Sharp, and plenty of others, and an original cover by Bryan. Hope that meets with your approval.

JUSTIFIED AND ANCIENT

Alan Woollcombe
Kingston-on-Thames
Dear Steve,
Just a line to say how impressed I am by the Spider-Man issue of *Comic Collector*, containing just the right balance of articles about the arachnid, as well as a long overdue retrospective on the late great Ron Embleton. 'Definitive' is the word I'm groping for here, despite the odd error.

Odd error? Well, yes: Mark Surridge makes two in his otherwise excellent Ditko appreciation. Dr. Strange's mentor was the Ancient One not the High One (who he?). And Mark writes "Joe Kubert was given the opportunity of writing, pencilling, inking and editing a title called *Tor* for St John", which is misleading because it implies that Kubert was hired to work on their title. *Wrong! Tor* was (and remains) Kubert's property and he just sold first printing rights to St John Publishing, in much the same way as Dark Horse publish *John Byrne's Next Men*. I should know: Joe told me so himself!

STRANGE CUSTOMS

Adrian Shelley
Southend-on-Sea
Dear Steve,
It seems that UK customs have recently made an effort to clamp down on 'adult' comics imported into this country. Under the 1876 Customs Regulation 42 they have the power to seize any material which they can see to be indecent (i.e. what they take offence to).

This is a far less stringent rule to the one applied to material already within the UK which must be shown as "likely to deprave and corrupt" those who see/read it. What's more, it goes against EEC law which, in Section 30, states that member states must not impose stricter limits on imports than those which are imposed on home produced goods.

In practise, it seems that EEC law carries little weight.

With regard to Ted Eames' letter in #6, a case has just been heard which could prove to be the comic

WRITER SEEKS ARTIST

Steven John Hilton
Barnsley

Dear Sir,
I am writing to ask if you could give any advice to young writers and artists attempting to break into comics, on both the best tactics to use and the comics/ periodicals that are most likely to take on new talent and strips.

I have tried in the past to get companies to notice my work as an artist, but even I have to admit it was not that inspired. I do have a lot of ideas I think would look good if drawn by someone else. Can you help?

There must be someone out there who has a glut of talent but no new ideas for comic strips!

We probably get more letters asking for advice on how to break into the business than on any other subject. Unfortunately we don't get the opportunity to answer every single letter we get, so this goes for everyone else who has written in on the subject. The SSI produce a submissions guide with advice that comes directly from the publishers, which will tell you exactly what they want. Their address is on page 65. But generally, don't submit material if you don't think it's up to scratch (chances are the editor won't too) or isn't at least as good as the stories the comic you are submitting to are currently running. Hawk your portfolio around conventions (the UK Comic Art Con in September and Glasgow CAC in March are the two largest conventions of the year in the UK). If you want to find an artist or writer let us know, and we'll try to put you in touch with each other, but please enclose an SAE.

continued from previous page

equivalent of the N.W.A. case he mentions. The *Meng and Ecker* comic published by Savoy has been declared obscene, not by a magistrate but by a High Court judge.

This ruling, if not contested, could prove disastrous for the future of the comic industry. I would call on every dealer, fan and creator reading this letter to protest this outrage. Write to Savoy, write to the Freedom Association . . . WE MUST MAKE SOME NOISE!

There are ways to minimise Customs seizures, but what has happened to Savoy is far more serious.

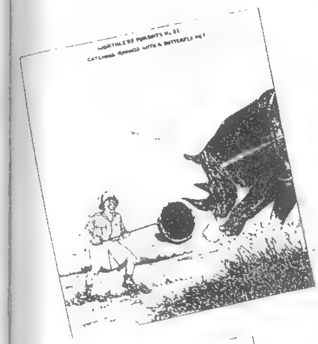
If the *Meng and Ecker* decision is not appealed further, with full support from the comics industry, then we might as well throw in the towel right now.

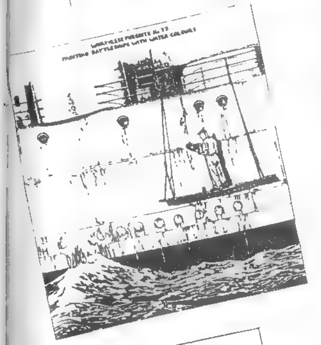
BATMAN COMPETITION WINNERS

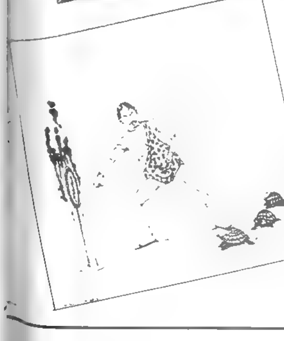
We thought we were being too generous and made the questions too easy. 99% of you gave the correct answers. Who were they in reality? For the 1% who need telling: Batman is Bruce Wayne, Catwoman is Selina Kyle and Penguin is Oswald Cobblepot. No extra prizes to the smart alecks who knew it was Oswald Chesterfield Cobblepot, but give yourself a pat on the back for being true Bat-oholics. Into the hat then, a quick stir, and the winners are: Darren Clark, Matthew Fletcher, Mark Paxton, Jason Newington, Ajay Sanathra, David Cooke, Roger Gibson, Lee Thomson, Matthew Pegg, Paul Ridgon, James Pope, Daniel Farrell, David Sawtell, Richard Hargreaves, Flip Roncone, Adrian Currie, Kent Taylor, David Leggatt, Sarah Waites, Paul Webster, Jane Charlton, Hemant Patel, George Crawford, Gavin McIntosh, Kevin Ogden, Mike Corcoran, Scott Traynor, Matthew Russell, D. Morgan, Martin McConville, Rachel Spencer, Daniel Stannard, Paul Wearne, Brian Turner, Colin Smith, James Bidwell. Congratulations to the 36 winners, the books should be with you already. Bad luck to everyone else, but keep trying - there's another 36 chances to win Death's Head T-Shirts this very issue. And not a single entry on a used fiver. Shame on you all! I could have been a rich man . . .

continued from page 50

PENGUIN


WORTHLESS PURSUITS
CATCHING RHINOS WITH A BUTTERFLY NET


WORTHLESS PURSUITS
PAINTING BATTLESHIPS WITH WATER COLOURS



Already known as regular publishers following the success of* Maus, *Penguin Books will be producing the* Love and Rockets *collection* House of the Raging Women *by Jaimie Hernandez on September 24.

***Penguin also have an extensive list of cartoon books, which includes the recently released* Your Mother is a Remarkable Woman *by Sam Gross, whose work appears regularly in major American papers and magazines including* The New Yorker *and* National Lampoon.**

November 5 sees the publication of* Alex 5 *by Pettie & Taylor, reprinting the newspaper strip, and* Never Give Up, *a new collection by Leeds-based cartoonist Jacky Fleming.

***Patrick Wright has a new collection published on December 3 entitled* Worthless Pursuits. *Wright, a one-time comic strip artist (his work includes a run on Modesty Blaise), has worked for publishers such as Heinemann and David Charles, and newspapers such as the* Daily Telegraph.**

***Looking further ahead, January 28 1993 will see the publication of another volume by comic artist Charles Burns, entitled* Skin Deep.**

VICTOR GOLLANCZ

The VG line of graphic novels has already produced* Signal to Noise *by Neil Gaiman and Dave McKean this year, and have scheduled* The Minotaurs Tale *by Al Davidson and* Kling Klang Klatch *by Ian McDonald & David Lyttleton for November 12, to be followed by another Gaiman & McKean collaboration,* Mr Punch, *in 1993.

TRANSWORLD

Better known as Corgi Books, Transworld will be reprinting* The Colour of Magic, *the 1991 4-issue mini-series published by Innovation. Based on the novel by Terry Pratchett, adapted by Scott Rockwell & Steven Ross, it's scheduled to be released November 12.

CA C'EST LA FRANCE

'Ca c'est la France' is the title for a round table discussion and exhibition of Bandes Desinees & Graphic Novels to be held at the Institut Francais, 17 Queensbury Place, London SW7 on Wednesday 30 September, starting at 6.30pm. The round table will be chaired by Paul Gravett. Speakers Dave McKean and Al Davidson represent the UK, and Max Cabanes, Francois Boucq and Fracois Vie (of the Centre de la Bande Dessinee et de l'Image d'Angouleme) represent France for a look at Graphic Novels in France and Britain. Admission free. The exhibition, France seen through the eyes of 12 French comics creators, runs until 16 October, 10.00am-7.00pm.

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★ The advance admission price for one day and special convention booklet is £10. Your application must reach us by **Monday August 24th 1992.**

★ The cost of tickets on the door will be £20 for the whole weekend and £12.50 for a single day - so you see it pays to apply in advance.

★ **ADMISSION IS FREE FOR CHILDREN UNDER 14 YEARS OLD IF ACCOMPANIED BY AN ADULT OVER 18 YEARS OLD.**

Accommodation

★ Accommodation will be at a nearby halls of residence for the night of Saturday September 19th and will cost £20 (included breakfast). Applications for accommodation must reach us by **Monday August 24th 1992.**

Overnight Film Festival

★ Last year's overnight film show held at the **Scala Cinema** was a great success with both convention attendees and the general public, and we hope to repeat the event this year on **Saturday September 19th.**

Costume Parade

★ Everyone who enters the contest wearing a proper costume will get £10 refunded! Changing rooms will be provided. The contest will be held on Saturday afternoon. *(Please see application coupon)*

The Convention

★In attendance at the convention will be representatives from the major comic companies including Marvel, DC, Dark Horse, Fleetway and Tundra.

★ There will be interviews and discussions featuring the convention guests, exhibitions of artwork, quizzes, and opportunities to obtain autographs and sketches.

★ Comic dealers will be selling rare back issues in addition to the latest titles, graphic novels, posters and other comics related merchandise. There will also be many pages of original artwork for sale.

★ This year's auction proceeds will again go to worthwhile causes. Artwork from the special convention booklet will up for bidding.

Registration

★ You should receive your convention badge and registration note within two weeks of application, or sooner if you apply near the deadline.

★ IMPORTANT: If you do not receive your registration form and badge by **Friday Septeber 11th** write to us immediately, preferably including a telephone number where you can be contacted.

★ IMPORTANT: **You must enclose a stamped and self-addressed envelope with your application so that we can return your badge and registration form. If you do not include a SAE your application will not be processed.**

Other Matters

★ All guests advertised on the leaflet have confirmed that they will be attending the UK Comic Art Convention 1992, and we can accept no responsibility for guests cancelling at short notice.

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Confirmed British guests so far include:

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PETE MILLIGAN BRYAN TALBOT JON BEESTON
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★ Please enclose an international reply coupon if applying from outside the UK.

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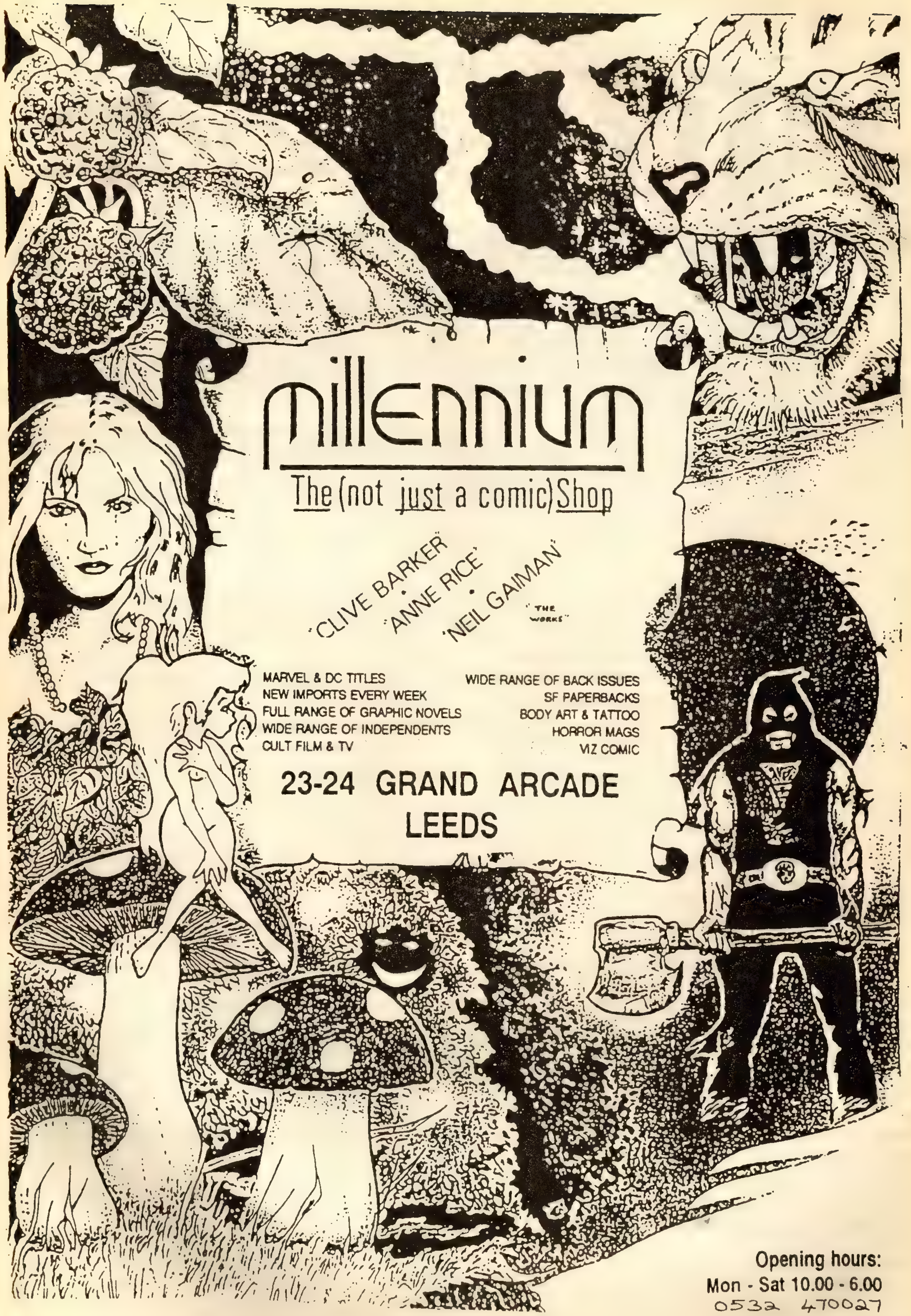

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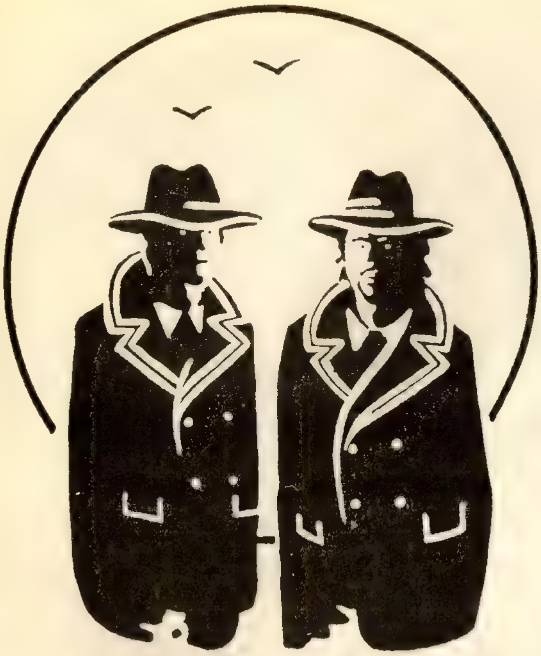

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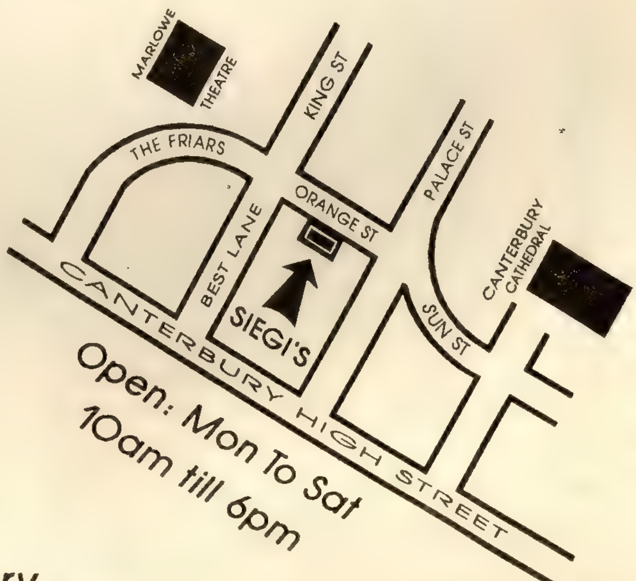
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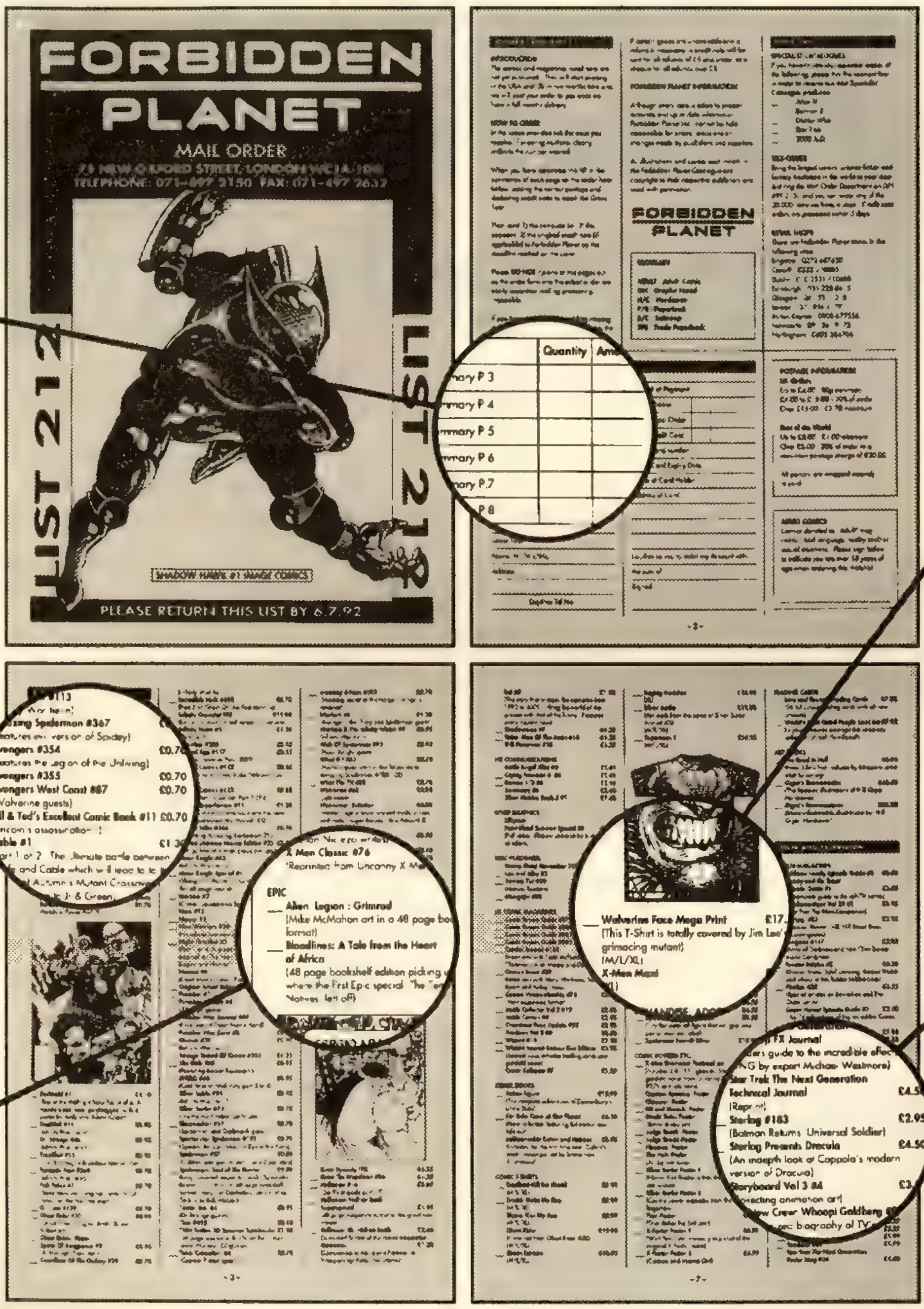

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G.	Good
F.	Fair
P.	Poor
B.S.	Bookshop Stamp on Cover
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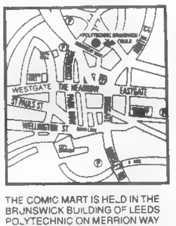

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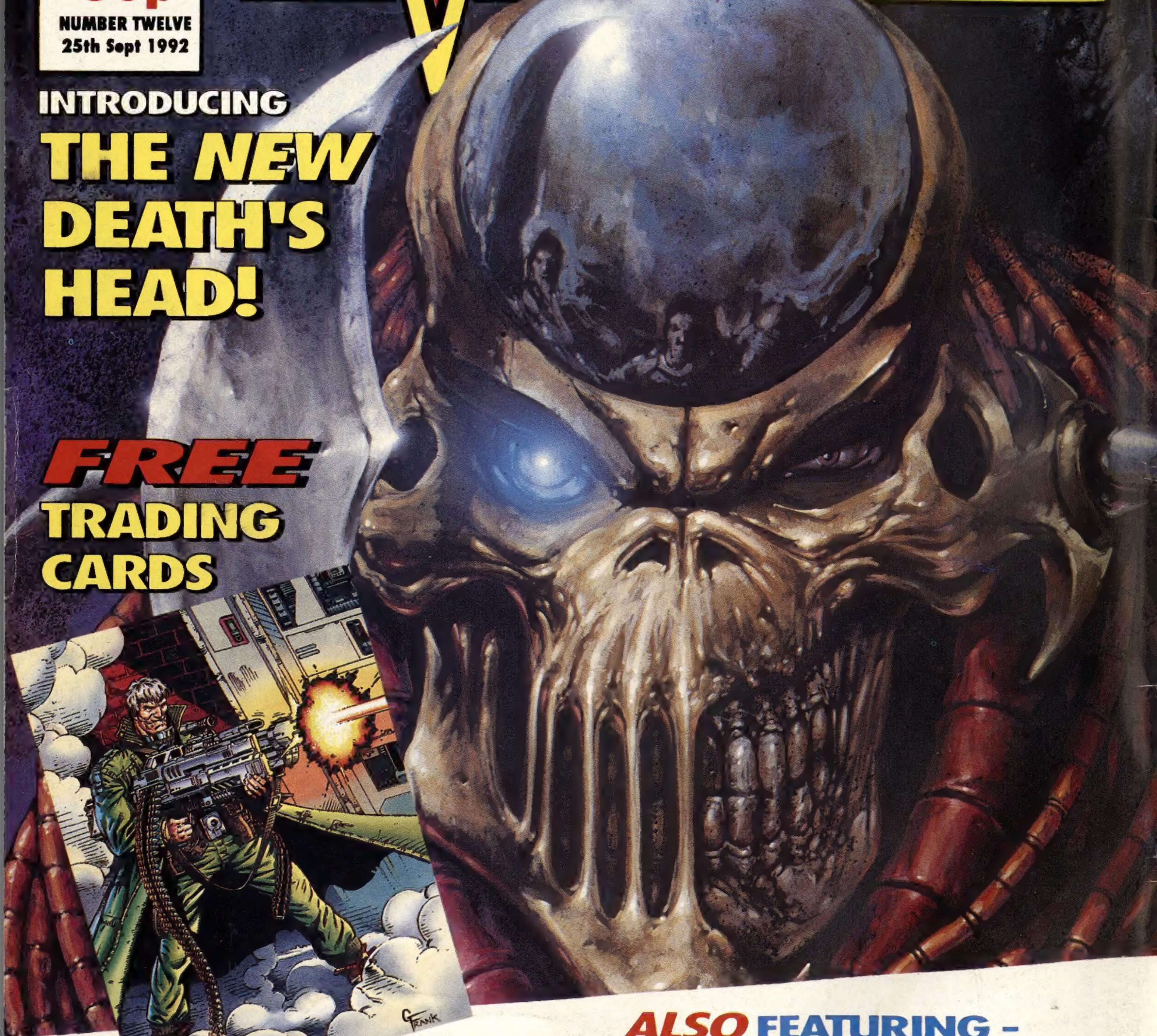

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